

HARMONY
OF THE
FOUR GOSPELS:

IN WHICH
THE NATURAL ORDER OF EACH IS PRESERVED.

WITH A
PARAPHRASE AND NOTES.

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**By JAMES MACKNIGHT, D. D.**  
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TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,
SOME ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE AND CHARACTER
OF THE AUTHOR.

*That thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been
instructed.*

LUKE i. 4.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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**THE THIRD EDITION.**  
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**1804.**



# PARAPHRASE & COMMENTARY

ON THE

## HARMONY OF THE FOUR GOSPELS.

### SECT. XXXIX.

*Jesus cures a Centurion's slave in Capernaum.*

Luke vii. 1,—10. See § 28.

**H**AVING finished his sermon, Jesus went into Capernaum and cured a centurion's slave who was dangerously ill. Luke vii. 1. *Now when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum.* 2. *And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick and ready to die.* 3. *And when he heard of Jesus, he \*sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant.* This centurion seems to have been what they called *a proselyte of righteousness*; for he was a lover of the Jewish nation on account of their religion, and had built them a synagogue for worship, probably in some heathen country, the inhabitants of Capernaum standing in no need of such a favour. His attachment to the Jews, and his uncommon generosity, could not fail to make him greatly beloved in that country.—Hence the elders of Capernaum, where he now resided, heartily espoused his cause on this occasion, for they presented his petition to Jesus, and urged it from the consideration of his character. 4. *And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this.* 5. *For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue.*—Jesus, who embraced every opportunity of doing good, whether to the bodies or souls of men, did not decline this that was now offered to him. He cheerfully went with the elders as they desired: But in the way, some of the centurion's friends whom he had sent, met Je-  
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sus

\* Ver. 3. *Sent unto him the elders of the Jews.*] These elders were not the most aged persons in Capernaum, but either the magistrates of the town, or the rulers of the synagogue, (*αρχισυνάγωγοι*). For as it was anciently the custom of the Jews, to intrust the management of public affairs to persons advanced in years, as having most wisdom and experience, they called all who discharged those offices *elders*, even when in later times they were admitted to them, without any regard to their age at all.



sus with a message from the centurion, in which he expressed the highest opinion of our Lord's power, and desired him not to take the trouble of coming, but to order the cure, which he knew he could easily do. 6. *Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself, for I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof.* 7. *Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee; but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed.* 8. *For I also am a man under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.* See on Matt. viii. 9. § 28. 9. *When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.* 10. *And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick.* The kindness of this centurion to his slave, and the anxiety he shewed to get him cured, was suitable to the character of an humane master, and exhibits an excellent pattern of duty very fit to be imitated by Christian masters, with whom it is but too common to treat their slaves and dependants, as if they were not creatures of the same rank with themselves, but of an inferior order.

See the reasons offered to prove this a different miracle from that which is recorded, Matt. viii. 5. § 28.

§ XL. *The apostles receive their commission and instructions in Capernaum* Matt. x. 1,—42. Mark iii. 19,—21. See § 58.

AFTER curing the centurion's slave, Jesus went to Peter's house, where he usually lodged. See on Matth. iv. 13. § 25. He had been with the disciples the whole preceding night in the mountain, and with the multitude the greatest part of the day in the plain, probably without taking any meat. Wherefore, being come home, they were going to eat something. But the citizens, brought together by the report of the miracle performed on the centurion's slave, surrounded the house in a tumultuous manner, and perhaps called on him to cure their sick, a favour which they thought he was bound in humanity to grant them, since he could do it without being personally present with the afflicted. Mark iii. 19 *And they went into an house.* 20. *And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread.* This rudeness incensed the disciples not a little. 21. *And when his friends heard of it, they went out to lay hold on him, for they said, He is beside himself\*.*

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\* Ver. 21.] Most translations render this verse as we do; but the meaning which they give is false, and such as suggests a very unbecoming idea of our Lord, who on no occasion behaved so as to give his friends



The multitude being dispersed, Jesus called his twelve apostles, and conferred on them the power of working miracles, in confirmation of the doctrine they were appointed to preach, delivered them their commission or authorized them to preach it, and gave them such instructions as he thought proper to fit them for discharging the duties of their new office. Matt. x. 1. *And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples.* From Matthew's naming them the *twelve*, it appears that he considered them as elected before this, though he has given no account of it in his gospel—he gave them power against *unclean spirits* to cast them out. Evil spirits are called *unclean*, because they are wicked and delight in wickedness, which is the only pollution of a spiritual being, and because they excite men to the commission of it.—*And to heal all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease* This power of working miracles was extremely necessary to the apostles, because being men of low degree, they could not otherwise have drawn the attention of the world, nor have gained credit to the unheard of doctrines which they were to preach. 2. *Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: the first Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother.* 3. *Philip and Bartholomew, Thomas and Matthew the publican, James the son of Alphaeus and Lebbaeus whose surname was Thaddeus.* 4. *Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.* See § 37. where the history of the twelve apostles is given. 5. *These twelve Jesus sent forth, namely to preach the gospel and to work miracles (verse 7, 8.) and commanded them, saying, \* Go not into the way of the Gentiles,*

room to suspect that he was mad. The original runs thus. *Και ακουσαντες οι παρ' αυτου εξελθον κρατησαι αυτον. ελεγον γαρ. οτι εξιστη. Οι παρ' αυτου, they that were with him, namely in the house, (ver. 19.) ακουσαντες, hearing, viz. the noise which the mob made at the door, they went out. κρατησαι αυτον, to restrain or quell, not Jesus, for he was in the house, (ver. 19) ου: the multitude or mob. (αυτον, it, viz. οχλον) either by dispersing them or keeping them out; for they said, εξιστη, viz. οχλῳ) The multitude or mob is mad. This sense the verb κρατω has without dispute, Rev. vii. 1. κρατησας τας τεσσαρας ανημους, "holding, detaining, restraining, the four winds on earth."*

\* Ver. 5. *Go not into the way of the Gentiles.* It may seem strange that our Lord neither preached himself to the Gentiles. nor allowed his disciples to preach among them during his own life time; especially when it is considered, that he came into the world on purpose to destroy the polytheism of the heathens, their idol mediators, and their idolatrous worship, and to establish the knowledge of the true God, and of the only mediator between God and man, and of the right method of obtaining his favour. But our wonder will cease, when the reason of his conduct is understood. As the Jews were the only people in the world who believed in the one true God, before his messengers attempted to preach him to the heathens, it was fit that they should prove their mission to the conviction of the Jews, instruct them more fully in the fundamental doctrines of religion,

and



*Gentiles*, i. e. their country ; for *the way of the sea* (Matth. iv. 15.) signifies the country round the sea.—*And into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not.* In travelling through Palestine, the apostles would often have occasion to go into Samaria ; but they were not to enter the cities thereof with a design to preach. It is true, in the beginning of his ministry our Lord himself preached to the Samaritans with great success, John iv. 41, 42. and therefore had he sent his apostles among them, numbers in all probability

and correct what errors had crept into their faith. Besides, Christianity was not only to be propagated through the world, by the force of its own intrinsic excellency, and by the miracles wherewith it was accompanied, but it was to make its way also by the evidence which it derived from the Jewish prophecies, and by the light thrown upon it, considered as the perfection of that grand scheme which was begun in the first ages, and carried on under various dispensations from time to time, till it obtained a more complete and lasting form under the Jewish economy. It was highly expedient, therefore, that a competent number of Jews should be converted to Christianity, who might publish it to the rest of the world with all the evidence that was proper to be offered. But if, on account of the former revelation made to the Jews, it was absolutely fit that the new revelation should be preached by them to the rest of the world, it was necessary that the gospel at the first should be confined to them ; because had it been preached to the Gentiles, that circumstance alone would have made the Jews reject it universally. It is well known how high the prejudices of the apostles themselves ran on this head, even after they had received the gifts of the Spirit, being excessively offended with Peter, one of their number, who by a vision from heaven had with difficulty been prevailed upon to preach to the proselyte Cornelius. Nay, they were hardly brought to believe that God intended to bestow the gospel on the Gentiles, when they saw them receive the greatest of its privileges in an equal degree with themselves, even the gifts of the Spirit. And though after this they preached to the Gentiles, yet wherever they came, their custom was to begin at the Jews, if there were any in the place, that all offence might be prevented ; and on the Jews rejecting the gospel, they turned to the Gentiles, Acts xiii. 46. Thus, as the apostle tells us, Rom. xv. 8. *Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision*, he preached only to the Jews ; for *the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers*, he preached to the Jews to make the truth of God manifest ; it being the most effectual means of confirming the promises made to Abraham and the rest of the fathers, namely, that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed. For thus the Jews were first blessed. It was likewise the most effectual means of blessing even the Gentiles themselves. Accordingly the apostle adds, as the fruit of this appointment, *and that the Gentiles might glorify God on account of his mercy* ; the mercy of the new covenant which they enjoy by their conversion to Christianity. The truth is, had Jesus Christ been a minister of the uncircumcision, that is, had he preached the gospel at all to the Gentiles, the Jews would have rejected it ; so that the proselytes, and such as held the faith of the proselytes, which the wiser sort of the Gentiles seem generally to have done, would not have become Christ's disciples with such ease and readiness. The reason was, the evidence of the gospel being greatly weakened by the unbelief of the Jews, the converts among the Gentiles would have been few in comparison, and by that means the promises made to the fathers, that in Christ all nations should be blessed, would not have been confirmed, or so fully accomplished, as it is by the scheme which Providence has actually chosen.



probability would have been induced to believe. But the inveterate enmity which the Jews bare to the Samaritans, made the conversion of the latter improper at this time, for the reasons mentioned in the note on ver. 5. Matt. x. 6. *But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel*: he called the Jews *lost sheep*, because, as he had told his disciples, (Matt. ix. 36.) they fainted and were scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd, and so were in danger of perishing, see Isa. xlix. 10. 7. *And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand*; publish every where the glad tidings of the approach of the Messiah's kingdom promised by the prophets. Properly speaking, *the kingdom of heaven* or gospel-dispensation, did not begin till the Jewish economy was abolished: and therefore the apostles, in our Lord's time, and even our Lord himself, preached the approach only, and not the actual existence of that kingdom. But though the apostles were directed to preach the approach of the kingdom of heaven, they did not yet fully understand its nature, that it was not to be a temporal but a spiritual kingdom, consisting in the dominion of righteousness and truth within men. —8. *Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, \* raise the dead, cast out devils*: † *freely ye have received, freely give*; perform all these miraculous cures in confirmation of your mission, without receiving any hire or reward for them of any kind. Matt. x. 9. *Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass ‡ in your purses.* Though

\* Ver. 8. *Raise the dead*] In several copies, the clause, *raise the dead*, is wanting; for which reason, and because the disciples did not raise any person from the dead, till after Christ's ascension, Dr Mills takes it to be an interpolation. But his opinion is ill founded, as it is certain that this, with several other articles in the apostles first commission, have a direct relation to the period comprehended under that more extensive commission, which they received after their master's resurrection. See ver. 18. 21. 23. of this chapter.

† Ver. 8. *Freely give.*] That the direction *freely ye have received, freely give*, relates to the miraculous cures which the apostles were empowered to perform, and not to the stated offices of the apostolical function, is evident from Luke x. 7. where our Lord, in giving a like commission to the seventy, bids them "eat and drink what was set before them, because the labourer was worthy of his hire." Nay, in this very charge, no sooner did he order the apostles to give freely, than he forbade them to provide gold, &c. "because the workman is worthy of his meat:" plainly insinuating, that while they were preaching the gospel, they had a right to maintenance from those who enjoyed the benefit of their labours, and should in the course of the divine Providence be supplied with all things necessary. Accordingly, we find the apostles receiving maintenance, and insisting upon it as their due, 1 Cor. ix. 4, 5, 14 Gal. vi. 6.

\* Ver. 9. *In your purses.*] Εν ζωναις, in your girdles. The eastern girdle being doubled and sewed along the edges, was more convenient for carrying a quantity of money than a purse, because the money being distributed round the body in the folds of the girdle, the weight of it was not so much felt. By money therefore in their girdles, is to be understood a considerable sum,



Though I forbid you to take money for the miraculous cures which you shall perform, I do not mean that you should beforehand lay up money for your support during your journey. You are not even to provide the clothes and shoes which you may have occasion for while you are abroad; because you shall be supplied with whatever you need by those to whom you preach the gospel, and you have a right to be thus supplied by them.

10. \* *Nor scrip for your journey. neither two coats, † neither shoes, ‡ nor yet staves: (for the workman is worthy of his meat).*

Our Lord forbade his disciples to provide beforehand such things as might be necessary during their journey, because they would be troublesome to them in travelling, and ordered them to go out thus unfurnished, partly that they might be inured in his own life-time to bear the hardships they would be exposed to afterwards, when discharging the apostolical function, and partly that their faith in the providence of God might be confirmed. For it must have afforded them great comfort ever after, to reflect on the singular care that was taken of them while out on their first mission, wholly unprepared to execute such an undertaking. Accordingly this was the use which Christ himself directed them to make of it, Luke xxii. 35. Matt. x. 11. *And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire || who in it is worthy, and there*

\* Ver. 10. *Nor scrip for your journey.*] The scrip (σκηνα) was a sort of large bag in which shepherds, and those who journeyed, carried their provisions. See on Luke x. 34. § 82. Thus the bag, into which David put the smooth stones, wherewith he smote Goliath, is called both a scrip and a shepherd's bag.

† Ibid. *Neither shoes.*] Υποδηματα. In the account which Mark gives of the repetition of these instructions, immediately before the disciples took their journey, he says they were permitted to be shod with sandals: (αλλ' υποδημουν σανδاليا, vi. 9.) The sandal was a piece of strong leather or wood, fastened to the sole of the foot with strings, which they tied round the foot and ankle; but the shoe was a kind of short boot, that covered the foot and part of the leg, and was a more delicate piece of dress than the sandal.

‡ Ibid. *Nor yet staves.*] Mark says the disciples were allowed to take a staff, vi. 8. But in Calvin's opinion, the seeming contradiction may be removed by attending to the ambiguity of the Hebrew word עֵשֶׂה, answering to the Greek ραβδον. For as the Hebrew word signifies any sort of rod, whether club, staff, sceptre, or pole, he thinks the staff which, according to Matthew, the disciples were prohibited to use, may have been a pole for carrying a burden on, an accoutrement that was useless, as they were not allowed to carry provisions with them, nor any spare clothes; whereas, the staff, which by Mark's account he permitted them to take, was a walking staff, very proper for those who were to perform a journey with expedition. See another solution, Prelim. Obs. I.—Heinsius labours to prove that *ε μη*, the exceptive particle in Mark, may signify *no not*; so would have the clause. *ε μη ραβδον μονον* translated, *no, not a single staff.*

|| Ver. 11. *Who in it is worthy.*] Anciently they had not houses of entertainment for the accommodation of travellers, such as we have, but only  
houses



*there abide till ye go thence.* When ye enter into any city, endeavour to find out those who are most remarkable for their piety, probity, and hospitality, who are expecting the Messiah's kingdom, who will receive the news of it with pleasure, and who, in all probability, will assist you in publishing it; and when ye have found such persons, abide with them till ye leave that city or village. We have this more fully expressed in the instructions to the seventy, Luke x. 7. "In the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they have; go not from house to house." Doubtless the disciples on some occasions might change their quarters with decency; but our Lord absolutely forbade them to do it for the sake of better entertainment, that they might not give mankind the least handle of imagining they served their bellies. Matt. x. 12. *And when ye come into an house, salute it:* or, as it is in the instructions given to the seventy, Luke x. 5. "Say, peace be to this house." For in the eastern countries \* the form of salutation used among friends was, *Peace be to you, or to this house.* Hence our Lord adds, 13. *And if the house be worthy, be of a hospitable disposition and receive you, let your peace come upon it;* let your salutation be made effectual, by its enjoying great temporal and spiritual prosperity; so do I command who have the government of the world. *But if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you;* your benediction shall return to yourselves, for ye shall be sure to find the more kindness elsewhere, that you have been ill used by these inhospitable people. 14. *And whosoever shall not † receive you, that is, entertain you kindly, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet.* The Jews fancied that the very dust of heathen countries polluted them; for which reason, when they returned to their own land, they used to stop at the borders of it, and wipe their feet, that the holy inheritance might not be defiled. If our Lord had this custom in his eye, his meaning was, Look upon those who refuse you the offices of humanity, and will not hearken to your instructions, as no better than heathens. Accordingly, the direction is thus expressed, Mark vi. 11. *Shake off the dust under your feet, for a testimony against*

houses for lodging them, called in modern language *Caravanserai's*, into which travellers brought their own provisions, and accommodated themselves the best way they could. But it was common for persons of humane dispositions, such as our Lord here calls ἀξιοί, *worthy persons*, to entertain strangers according to their ability. See Judges xix. 15,—21.

\* The form of salutation, &c.] Thus when Moses and his father-in-law Jethro met, the text says they asked each other peace, Exod. xviii. 7. that is, asked for peace, prayed for it, wished it to each other. See John xiv. 27.

† Ver. 14. *Receive you.*] In scripture, *to receive one*, signifies to allow him the benefit of our company, to converse familiarly with him, and to do him good offices. See Luke xv. 2. It signifies also to entertain one hospitably; being applied twice to Rahab's entertaining the spies, Heb. xi. 31. James ii.



*against them* : declare in the plainest manner, that for the future you will not have the least intercourse with such an obstinate and impious race. Matt. x. 15. *Verily I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah, in the day of judgment, than for that city* : persons, the matter of whose crimes far exceed theirs, are less guilty than they, because they have not despised such advantages, so that they shall be more lightly punished.

Considering the nature of the tidings which the apostles were now sent out to publish, namely, that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, considering also the number and variety of the miraculous cures which they were enabled to perform in confirmation of their doctrine, together with the greatness of the benefits they were empowered to confer upon the families who should entertain them kindly, it is reasonable to think that they were flattering themselves with the hopes of great honour and acceptance wherever they came. In the mean time, the event was by no means to answer their expectation. They were every where to be despised, persecuted, delivered up into the hands of public justice, and punished as evil doers. Our Lord therefore thought fit to forewarn them of these things, made them large promises of the divine aid, and gave them directions with respect to their conduct in every circumstance. Matt. x. 16. *Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves* : I now send you forth weak and defenceless among a cruel and wicked people. *Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves* : on the one hand, be so prudent as not to irritate the wicked, and those who shall oppose you, either by your behaviour or your doctrine unnecessarily, (Matt. vii. 6.) ; on the other hand, let not your prudence degenerate into craft, lest it lead you to betray the truth, or to encourage men in their evil practices. Join prudence and innocence together, rendering yourselves remarkable for *integrity* amidst the greatest temptations, and for *meekness* under the greatest provocations. 17. *But beware of men* : though I order you to be meek and patient under injuries, I do not mean that you should not be on your guard, and if possible avoid them. No ; the more circumspect you are in the whole of your conversation with the men of this world, whom I before compared to wolves, it is so much the better ; for, after all, you will meet with many indignities, and often be in danger of death, even from the hand of public justice ; *for they will deliver you up to the councils. and they will scourge you in their synagogues* as apostates. 18. *And ye shall be brought before governors and kings, as malefactors, for my sake*. These things did not happen while the apostles were out on their first mission. They came to pass after Christ's ascension, when Peter and John were called before the sanhedrim, Acts iv. 6, 7. and beaten, Acts v. 40. Also when James and Peter



Peter were brought before Herod, Acts xii. 3. Paul before king Agrippa and his wife, and the Roman governors Gallio, Felix, Festus; and, last of all, before the emperor Nero, and his prefect Helius Cæsarianus.—*For a testimony against them and the Gentiles: all these things are ordered to befall you, that your innocence may appear, and that the truth of the gospel may be demonstrated.* Accordingly, the patience which the apostles shewed under continual persecutions, and the courage wherewith they went to death in confirmation of their doctrine, became strong proofs of their innocence, and of the truth of the gospel. Moreover, if the apostles had never been brought before the supreme powers, nor defended their cause in the presence of kings and governors, it might have been said, that because Christianity could not bear a strict examination from able judges, it was preached to none but men of vulgar understandings, who were not capable of detecting it. But when persons of the highest distinction for birth, fortune, capacity and learning, had the gospel laid before them in the defences which the apostles were obliged to make at the public tribunals of every country, its standing such a trial was certainly a great confirmation of its truth to persons of inferior note. Wherefore, as Jesus here foretold, the persecutions which the apostles suffered, and their being brought before kings, became a testimony of their innocence, and of the truth of the gospel, and consequently an undeniable proof of the guilt both of the Jews and Gentiles who rejected it. 19. *But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak, for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.* 20. *For it is not ye that speak but the spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.* This direction was repeated on several occasions afterwards, particularly Luke xii. 11. Mark xiii. 11. The apostles being illiterate men, and wholly unacquainted with the laws of the different countries whither they were to go, and with the forms of their courts, their Master foresaw that they would be in great perplexity, when they appeared as criminals before persons of the first distinction. He foresaw, likewise, that this circumstance would occur to themselves, and render them anxious to meditate beforehand, by what apology they might best defend so noble a cause. More than once, therefore, he expressly forbade them to be in the least solicitous about the defences they were to make, or so much as to premeditate any part of them; promising to afford them on all occasions the aid of their Father's spirit, who would inspire them to speak in a manner becoming the cause they were to defend. 21. *And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child, and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death: such is the nature of the men among whom ye are going, and such the obstinacy with which*

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they shall oppose the gospel, that were it their brother, their father, or their son who preaches it, they would make no scruple of being active in putting those nearest relations to death. You may therefore expect the hottest persecution. But as you are to have great assistances, you need not be dismayed. 22. *And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake*, i. e. ye shall be hated by the generality of men. The apostles and first Christians set themselves in opposition both to the Jewish and Pagan religions, declaring the nullity of the former, and urging the renunciation of the latter in all its forms, as matter of indispensable necessity. On the most tremendous penalties they required every man, without exception, to believe in Christ, and submit implicitly to his authority; a demand most galling to the pride of princes, priests, and philosophers. Moreover, having a lively sense of the importance of the things which they preached, they urged them not in a cold and indifferent manner, but with the utmost fervency. Need it be matter of wonder then, that in every country such a furious storm of persecution arose against them and the religion they taught, and that they were treated as the filth and offscourings of the earth? *But he that endureth to the end shall be saved.* This encouragement Jesus likewise gave his disciples, when he spake to them of the sufferings they were to meet with, about the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, Matt. xxiv. 13. We may therefore believe, that he had those sufferings now in his view. 23. *But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another; for verily I say unto you, ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.* Let not the persecutions ye are to meet with in any period of your ministry discourage you; but when ye are sore pressed in one city, flee into another, where ye will meet with an asylum; for I assure you, in spite of all opposition, your labours shall be attended with such success, that *ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come*: before ye have carried the glad tidings of the gospel to the several cities of Israel, my kingdom shall be established in many places; so that in the midst of the hottest persecution, ye may always expect to find some who will befriend you. By the *coming of the Son of man* here mentioned, Lightfoot understands his resurrection from the dead; others the destruction of Jerusalem, called the coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven, Matt. xxiv. 30.; others the miraculous effusion of the Spirit, named by our Lord himself, his coming, John xiv. 18.; but the last is the more simple and natural explication. 24. *The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord.* 25. *It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord: if they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?* That you may bear all with a becoming fortitude, consider that they



they have calumniated, traduced, and persecuted me your master, for which cause, you my disciples cannot think it hard if they shall calumniate and persecute you. Matt. x. 26. *Fear them not therefore, for there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, and hid that shall not be known*: Be not afraid of their calumnies, however false or malicious, for neither shall their wickedness nor your innocence be always concealed; both shall be manifested, at least in the day of judgment. Wherefore, the doctrines of the gospel which I have delivered to you in private, you ought to preach plainly and publicly without the fear of men. 27. *What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light; and what ye hear in the ear (in private) that preach ye upon the house tops*. See on Mark ii. 4. § 33. 28. *And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell*. The utmost malice of your enemies cannot reach your better part, your soul, it can only hurt your body; for which reason you ought to fear them less than God, who, if you offend him, can destroy (torment, so *απολίσσει* sometimes signifies) both soul and body in hell. Besides, you should consider that your enemies cannot touch even your bodies, without your Father's permission. For the meanest of his creatures are under the protection of his providence, insomuch that nothing befalleth them without its direction. 29. *Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father*. The regard which the great Father of the universe has for all his creatures, small and great, is strongly represented in the book of Jonah, where God makes his compassion to brute beasts, one of the reasons why he would not destroy Nineveh. "Should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than six score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left, and also much cattle?" 30. *But the very hairs of your head are all numbered*. Men number whatever things of value are in their possession, lest any of them should be lost through the carelessness or knavery of those who have them in charge. The numbering therefore of the disciples hairs, shews how precious his servants are in God's sight, and what a strict account he takes of every thing that concerns them. 31. *Fear ye not, therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows*: since the least of God's creatures are so much the object of his care, ye who are honoured with so important an employment as that of preaching the gospel is, need not be afraid. 32. *Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven*. 33. *But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven* (See 2 Tim. ii. 12. Rev. iii. 5. Rom. x. 9,—11.) Whosoever shall make profession of my religion in time of persecution, and by an inviolable attachment



tachment to its precepts, shall acknowledge me for his master, I will own him as my disciple in presence of my Father at the judgment, and will claim for him the rewards which my Father has promised to such; whereas, whosoever does not thus confess me before men, I also will not confess him before my Father. There is unspeakable majesty in this article of our Lord's discourse. Although he was now in the lowest state of humanity, he declared that his confessing us before God is the greatest happiness, and his denying us the greatest misery that can possibly befall us. (See on Mark viii. 38. § 71.) 34. *Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.* 35. *For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.* 36. *And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.* Because the prophets have spoken glorious things of the peace and happiness of the world under the reign of Messiah, Isa. xi. 6. whom they have named, for that reason, the Prince of peace, Isa. ix. 6. you may imagine that I am come to put the world into that happy state forthwith, But it is not so. For though the nature of my government be such as might produce abundant felicity, in regard my religion breathes nothing but love, men will not at first lay aside their animosity, nor will they exercise a mutual friendship among themselves as soon as the gospel is preached to them. No; such is their wickedness, that they shall make the gospel itself an occasion of bitter dissensions, in so much, that it will look as if I had come on purpose to sow discord among men. For, as I told you before, the nearest relations shall quarrel among themselves, on account of the doctrines of the gospel, and prosecute their quarrels with surprising virulence. The reader will be pleased to observe, that thus to apply our Lord's words to Christians, is the most unfavourable sense that can be put upon them, seeing they may as properly be interpreted of the unbelieving Jews and Heathens, who persecuted their nearest relations to death on account of the gospel. In neither sense however can it be thought, that they declare the end for which the Son of God came into the world. They only foretel what the effect of his coming would be. The glorious state of things predicted by the prophets was not instantly to begin, but Christianity was for a season to be the innocent occasion of much mischief. However, as \*these bad consequences

\* These bad consequences are by no means peculiar to Christianity.] The Deists indeed boldly affirm, that the diversity of religious opinions and worships which prevailed among the heathens, never produced either bloodshed or disorder, nor broke in on the peace of mankind. But their assertion is false. It is true, we are not so well acquainted with the religious disputes of the heathens as we are with our own; but the reason is, not that there were no such disputes, but that the historians of those times did



consequences are by no means peculiar to Christianity, they must not be imputed to it, but to the wickedness of men.—37. *He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me.* He that preferreth the friendship of his nearest relations, though the sweetest of all earthly satisfactions, to my religion, renouncing it that he may enjoy their good will, does not deserve to be called a Christian. He told them this very properly, after having declared that their bitterest foes should be the members of their own families.—38. *And he that taketh not his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me:* Whosoever does not resolve to suffer the greatest hardships rather than renounce my religion, is not worthy to bear my name. There is here an allusion to the customs of the Romans, who obliged criminals to bear the crosses on which they were to suffer, out to the place of execution. The figure therefore expresses this sentiment with great energy, that no man can be a true Christian unless he is willing to endure all sorts of persecutions, together with the most shameful and painful deaths, for Christ's sake, when called to it. So that

did not think them worth mentioning. Yet some flagrant instances are accidentally preserved, by which we may judge of the rest. Socrates, one of the best of the heathens, was put to death by the Athenians, the wisest and most learned of all the Greeks, for teaching the unity of God, as we are told, and the spirituality of the worship that is due to him. Aristotle, the philosopher, was impeached likewise for his opinions, and obliged to flee from Athens, lest he should have incurred the fate of Socrates. Antiochus Epiphanes raised a most violent and bloody persecution of the Jews in their own country on account of religion, wherein many thousands perished, who would not submit to the idolatrous worship which he set up in the temple of Jerusalem. The emperor Claudius banished the Jews from Italy for their religion, pretending that they were seditious. The religious quarrels of the Egyptians, the fury with which they prosecuted them, and the disturbances which they occasioned, are well known. See Juven. Sat. xv. And, to name no more, was there ever any persecution raised by Christians, either against one another, or against infidels, more bloody, cruel, and extensive than the ten persecutions carried on by the heathen Roman emperors, at the instigation of the philosophers? It is not to the purpose to reply, that these were persecutions of men who set themselves to overturn the established religions of the countries where they lived. For while they attacked them with the force of argument only, they ought to have been repelled by no other weapon. And if they could not be thus quelled, their adversaries, instead of persecuting them, ought to have yielded to truth. Whilst the accounts of those persecutions stand on record, it must not be a little impudence that is able to bear the Deists out in affirming, that the ancient heathen religions never inspired their votaries with a spirit of persecution. Yet it will not reflect any dishonour on Christianity, though it should be allowed to have occasioned more disturbances than any other religion. On the contrary, it is rather a proof of its superior excellency. For if Christianity animates the persons who believe it, with greater zeal for truth, it is because it approves itself better worth the contending for. Its evidences are clearer, and its tendency better than those of any false religion; and therefore no wonder that men have espoused its interest more heartily.



that the case in short comes to this : He that makes shipwreck of faith and a good conscience to save his life, shall lose that which is really so, his everlasting happiness ; whereas, he that maintaineth integrity at the expence of life and all its enjoyments, shall find what is infinitely better, a blessed immortality. 39. *He that findeth his life shall lose it ; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.* 40. *He that receiveth you, receiveth me ; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me :* Whoso acknowledgeth you as my apostles, and hearkens to you as such, acknowledges and obeys me ; and he who does so, really acknowledges and obeys God who has commissioned me to reveal his will to men, even as I now send you on the same errand. 41. *He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward ; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward :* He who obeys a prophet as a person commissioned by God, to reveal future events and to teach men their duty, who reverences him as God's messenger, and who assists him in the execution of his office, shall receive a reward of the same kind with that which is promised to prophets, on account of their having turned many to righteousness. And he who respects and encourages a righteous man, shall receive the reward due to righteousness, of which this is an excellent instance.—42. *And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones* (see on Matth. xi. 25. § 43.) *a cup of cold water only,* water in its natural state without any preparation, which certainly is the least favour imaginable, *in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.* He who doth any good office whatever to the meanest of my disciples, though it should be but the small service of handing a cup of cold water to them, shall not go unrewarded. The above is the common interpretation of this passage. But other commentators think it improper to interpret these promises of the rewards of the life to come, because the offices to which they are annexed may possibly be performed by very bad men, who on some occasions honour and cherish the servants of Christ, as Herod did John Baptist. Besides, the promises thus understood, would not have animated the disciples so powerfully in the discharge of their duty, under the difficulties they were to meet with. Wherefore, if the circumstance of men suffering persecution, for having done such good offices to the ministers of Christ, which Le Clerc has supplied here in order to obviate this difficulty, is not admitted, we must understand these rewards actively, of the temporal blessings, which the apostles, as prophets and righteous men, were empowered to confer on the families who shewed them hospitality. As prophets they could heal the sick in those families, and raise their dead. As righteous men, they could assist them in the management of their affairs,



affairs, by giving them prudent advice in difficult cases, also might keep them back from sin by their religious conversation and example; and in both capacities might draw down many blessings on them by their prayers. (See ver. 13. of this chapter.) You are to meet, said he, with great opposition, but I will engage men to befriend you; for all who do you any kindness, shall even in this life be so rewarded by your miracles and prayers, that they shall be confirmed in their good will to you; and others observing how God has blessed them, shall be excited to imitate their humanity. Calvin thinks this text teaches, that the rewards of the good offices mentioned, will bear a proportion to the dignity of the person receiving them. L'Enfant imagines, that our Lord alludes to the old custom of carrying presents to prophets when persons went to consult them, 1 Sam. ix. 7. But whatever sense we put upon the passage, the declaration and promises here made, joined with verse 14. where our Lord threatens to punish those who should reject his messengers, were excellently calculated to comfort them, under the prospect of the bad reception he told them they were to meet with, while employed in preaching the gospel \*.

\* These instructions were afterwards repeated to the apostles more briefly, when they were actually sent out, Mark vi. 8. Luke ix. 1. § 58. For it does not appear that they went away immediately upon receiving their commission. They heard Jesus a considerable time after they were ordained apostles. And indeed it was necessary that they should do so, in order to learn more fully the doctrines of the gospel which they were to preach. It is probable, therefore, that they did not depart till they went by two's, on account of which we have in the passages quoted. Wherefore, the evident propriety of this supposition, as well as the order of the history, renders it abundantly probable. Yet if the reader shall think that the word *ἀποσταλῆναι*, used by Matthew, ver. 5. signifies something more than *an order given to go forth in due time*, he must suppose either that Jesus sent his apostles out twice, or that Matthew gives the history of their mission along with that of their commission, as he might very properly do, notwithstanding their mission did not happen till several months after. His words will easily bear this interpretation, as he only says, *these twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying*, without determining particularly the time when he sent them forth. For that they did not go away immediately after their ordination, may be gathered from this, that we find them accompanying Jesus in his next tour to Nain, Luke vii. 11. § 41. See the note on that passage. Besides, we find the disciples with him in the journey which he took immediately after to the passover.

§ XLI. *Jesus goes to Nain and raises a widow's son from the dead.* Matt. xi. 1. Luke vii. 11,—17.

OUR Lord having thus delivered to the apostles their commission and instructions, set out with them, probably that very evening, on a new tour through the cities and villages, proposing to preach to as many as would hear him, and to work miracles of healing on those who should apply to him. Mat. xi. 1. *And it came to*



*to pass when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities.* He chose to begin his journey in the cool of the evening, that he might travel more commodiously ; for Luke assures us that the day after the apostles were elected he arrived at Nain, a town situated about a mile or two south of Tabor, and near Endor. (See Reland's *Palestin. Illustrat.*) In this journey, he was attended by a crowd of disciples and others. Luke vii. 11. *And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain, and \* many of his disciples went with him, and much people.* When Jesus, and the multitude that attended him, came to the gates of Nain, they met the corpse of a youth whom much people of the city were carrying out to burial, accompanied by his afflicted mother bathed in tears. 12. *Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow ; and much people of the city was with her.* This woman, being a widow, had no prospect of more children ; wherefore, as he was her only son, the loss she sustained in him was very great. Hence the sympathy which she received from her relations and acquaintance was singular. In testimony of their concern for her, a crowd of people much greater than was usual on such occasions, attended her while she performed the last duty to her beloved son. This circumstance the evangelist takes notice of to shew, that though there had been no persons present at the miracle but those who attended the funeral, it was illustrious on account of the number of the witnesses. Jesus, whose tenderness made him susceptible of the strongest impressions from occurrences of this kind, knowing that the mother's affliction was bitter, and the occasion of it real, was greatly moved with compassion at the sorrowful scene. 13. *And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.* Nor was his sympathy vain. He resolved to turn their mourning into joy, by raising the young man from the dead. And he could do this with a good grace, because having met the funeral by accident just as he was finishing a journey, it plainly appeared that there was no collusion in the case. Besides, the multitude of people attending the corpse, as Dr Lardner has remarked, entirely prevents all suspicion, that the person carried out was not dead ; since to manage with success a fraud, in which so many must have been concerned, was absolutely impossible. The miracle therefore being liable to no objection, Jesus

\* Luke vii. 11. *Many of his disciples went with him.*] I suppose the apostles were of the number of the disciples here said to have made part of his retinue, because it is not to be imagined that he would suffer the chosen witnesses of his miracles (Acts x. 39.) to be absent, when so great a miracle was to be performed as the resurrection of a person from the dead ; nay, was to be performed publicly, in the presence of all those who were carrying him out, in order to bury him.



he came next, laid hold on the bier, and bade the young man  
 arise. 14. *And he came and touched the bier, and they that bare  
 him stood still, and he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.—*  
 No sooner had he uttered this command than the youth revived,  
 having received life from Jesus. 15. *And he that was dead sat  
 up, and began to speak; and he delivered him to his mother:* In-  
 stead of shewing him around to the multitude, Jesus, by a singular  
 exercise of modesty and humanity, presented him to his mother,  
 to intimate, that in compassion of her affliction he had wrought  
 the life-giving miracle. At the same time, as it was performed  
 hard by the city gate, which anciently in those countries was the  
 place of public resort, the youth must have been raised from the  
 dead in presence of many witnesses, particularly the multitude  
 which came with Jesus, the people who accompanied the corpse,  
 and all who on business happened to be at that instant in the  
 gate. Wherefore, being so publicly performed, this great mira-  
 cle became also a noble confirmation of our Lord's mission. 16.  
*And there came a fear on all:* All the people present being sen-  
 sible, that Jesus shewed in this instance, not only the greatness of  
 his power, but the truth of his mission from God, were seized  
 with a religious awe and reverence which had him for its object,  
 —and they glorified God, saying, *That a great prophet is risen  
 up among us; and, That God hath visited his people.* This is  
 the expression which Zacharias, the father of the Baptist, used  
 when he spake of the coming of Messiah. Wherefore the mean-  
 ing of the inhabitants of Nain was this: God hath visited his  
 people, by having raised up among them the great prophet pro-  
 mised to Moses in the law. The evangelist justly observes, that  
 by acknowledging Jesus as Messiah, they honoured God.—17.  
*And this rumour of him, that he was the prophet promised to  
 Moses, or Messiah, went forth throughout all Judea, and throug-  
 hout all the region round about:* Wherever the miracle was re-  
 ported, which was not only in Judea, but in all the neighbouring  
 regions, it produced the same opinion in those who heard of it, as  
 it had done in the inhabitants of Nain who saw it; so that Jesus  
 was universally believed to be Messiah.

§. XLII. *John Baptist sends messengers to Jesus. They find him  
 at Capernaum. Jesus vindicates the Baptist's character.* Mat.  
 xi. 2,—20. Luke vii. 18,—35.

ALL this while, John Baptist was in prison, Herod having con-  
 fined him for the freedom which he took in reprovng his adulte-  
 rous commerce with Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. But  
 his confinement was not of the closest kind, for his disciples had  
 access to see him frequently. In one of those visits, they gave  
 him an account of the election of the twelve apostles to preach  
 the gospel, and of Christ's miracles; particularly that he had



lately raised from the dead Jairus' daughter, and the widow of Nain's son; as is plain from Luke, who brings in the history of John's message immediately after these miracles, in the following manner: Luke vii. 18. *And the disciples of John shewed him of all these things.* Matt. xi. 2. *Now when John had heard in prison the works of Christ, he sent, &c.* Luke vii. 19. *And John calling unto him two of his disciples, sent them unto Jesus, saying, Art thou he that should come, the appellation given to Messiah, Hab. ii. 3. or look we for another?* Formerly John had pointed out our Lord out as Messiah to the people who attended his ministry, and had declared that the discovery was made to him by revelation. It may therefore seem strange, that he should at any time have entertained the least doubt of it, because that would imply a thing which can by no means be admitted, *viz.* that a prophet might be in an uncertainty with respect to his own inspiration. To obviate this difficulty, some have supposed that John sent his disciples only to learn whether the person who performed those miracles was he on whom the Spirit formerly had descended. But the supposition is improbable, as at this time there was no other worker of miracles in Judea, who could give occasion to the doubt. Besides, when John's disciples spake of Jesus, they must have mentioned him by his name, which the Baptist was well acquainted with, or they must have described him so as to distinguish him sufficiently from all other persons whatever, as we find them doing, John iii. 26. "Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness," &c. Wherefore, the weakness of this solution is evident. Others think that John did not send his disciples to Jesus for the confirmation of his own faith, but for the strengthening of theirs. However, the scope of the passage forbids this solution also, insinuating that he sent the message for his own sake principally. His disciples, it is said, came and related to him Christ's miracles; particularly the two resurrections which had been lately performed. But the more and greater miracles Jesus wrought, the higher must the opinion have been which the Baptist's disciples entertained of him. His miracles, instead of weakening, should have strengthened their faith in him, and in their master's testimony concerning him. Besides, had the greatness of his miracles really staggered their faith, it is not easy to understand how they should have been disposed to believe Christ's testimony concerning himself, rather than their master's concerning him. Not to mention that Jesus bade the disciples go and carry his answer to John, "Go, tell John what ye hear and see," plainly implying, that John had sent the message for his own sake chiefly, and not for the sake of his disciples.

The Baptist entertaining an high opinion of his own gifts, thought it was necessary that he should preach the gospel, and  
 prepare



prepare men for the erection of Christ's kingdom. From the very beginning of his imprisonment, therefore, both he and his disciples had certainly expected that the divine power, which Jesus was every day giving fresh proofs of, would have been exerted in bringing about his release. And though they had not hitherto perceived any appearance of such a miracle, they had still waited with patience, and entertained hopes of it. But when John gat notice, that twelve illiterate fishermen were chosen to preach the gospel, and furnished with miraculous powers for that purpose; and that two persons of no consideration at all were raised from the dead, while he was suffered to lie idle and useless in prison, he began at length to find that Jesus did not put that value upon his services which he thought they deserved, and of consequence, that no miracle would be wrought for his deliverance. His patience therefore being quite tired, he sent this message to Jesus, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" Not as if he entertained any doubt of his being Messiah; but by asking the question, he complained that Jesus had not acted the part which he thought Messiah should have acted. That this was the Baptist's frame of mind when he sent his disciples to Christ, may be gathered also from the answer which he received. For our Lord, after having performed various miracles in presence of the messengers, bade them go tell their master what they had heard and seen. Luke vii. 20. *When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?* 21. *And in that same hour he cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits, and unto many that were blind he gave sight.* It happened that at the time the Baptist's disciples came to Jesus, a vast number of diseased, blind and possessed people were waiting on him in order to be cured. Wherefore, Jesus embraced the opportunity, and in presence of the Baptist's messengers instantly cured them all.—22. *Then Jesus answering, said unto them, Go your way, and tell John (Mat. again) what things ye have seen and heard, how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised,* plainly claiming the powers ascribed by Isaiah to Messiah. For that prophet, chap. xxxv. had expressly foretold, that at the coming of God to save his people, ver. 5. "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. 6. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing." Wherefore, by his miracles Jesus clearly proved himself to be Messiah, only he left it to the Baptist and his disciples to draw the conclusion themselves:—*to the poor the gospel is preached.* (Matthew, *and the poor have the gospel preached to them.*) It was another of the characters of Messiah, mentioned by Isaiah, that he was to preach the gospel to the poor. See on



on Luke iv. 18. § 24. This too was remarkably verified in Jesus. For he did not court the favour of the great and the rich, by shewing them peculiar respect in the exercise of his ministry. No: he preached to the poor, and assisted them by his miracles as readily as the rich; and by so doing distinguished himself from the Jewish doctors, who being for the most part lovers of pleasures, associated with the rich and neglected the poor. Farther, by preaching the gospel to the poor, Messiah was distinguished also from all the heathen philosophers and priests. For whereas they concealed the mysteries or depths of their doctrine from the vulgar, and those who were not initiated; he opened his to every one without distinction, to the poor as well as to the rich, to the unlearned as well as to the learned. Others put a different sense upon the clause *πτωχοι ευαγγελιζονται*, translating it actively, *The poor preach the gospel*; as if Jesus intended to insinuate that the Baptist had no reason to be displeased with the election of twelve illiterate fishermen to preach the gospel, while he, whose gifts were far superior to theirs, was suffered to lie useless in prison; because this also was one of the characters of the Messiah's reign mentioned by Isaiah. According to this interpretation, our Lord's meaning was, Go and tell your master, that the miracles you have seen me perform, are the very miracles which Isaiah long ago predicted Messiah should perform, and that the persons I have chosen to assist me in preaching the gospel, are such as the same prophet has pointed out for that work. He desired them also to tell their master from him, that he would do well not to be offended, either at the choice he had made of the apostles, or at no miracles being wrought for his release. 23. *And blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me.* Our Lord's answer, therefore, was designed to make the Baptist sensible of the unreasonableness of his discontentment, and to teach him submission in a case which was plainly above the reach of his judgment. For Christ's kingdom was to be erected, not in the method which John thought the most proper, but which he himself saw to be so. That John should have grown impatient under his long confinement, is not more surprising than that the prophet Jonah should have been out of humour, first at the preservation of Nineveh, and then at the withering of his gourd.

Our Lord saw this matter, not as John did, but in its true light. He knew that if a miracle had been wrought for his fore-runner's deliverance, it might have lessened the weight of his testimony, because some would have alleged, that the two were combined together to advance each other's reputation. The Baptist, indeed, on a former occasion had been at pains to prevent all suspicion of this kind; for when he testified that Jesus was Messiah, he at the same time declared, that he did not so much as know his pretensions to the character, till he saw the Spirit descend upon him in



a visible manner at his baptism, John i. 38. Besides, that which gave John Baptist such offence, was by the direction of the divine Providence made the strongest support of the gospel. The weakness of the instruments employed in preaching it, clearly demonstrated the excellency of the power by which they acted; for which reason Jesus made it twice the matter of particular thanksgiving. See Matt. xi. 25. § 42. Luke x. 11. § 81.

But lest the people who heard John's message, should have entertained harsh thoughts of him on account of it, our Lord thought fit to set his character in its true light, Matt. xi. 7. *And as they departed, (Luke, When the messengers of John were departed) Jesus began to say unto the multitudes (Luke, the people) concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? a reed shaken with the wind?* that is, a man of an unstable disposition, and of a cowardly behaviour. In this question, which implies a strong negation, the invincible courage and constancy of the Baptist is applauded. His imprisonment for reproving king Herod, shewed that he was not afraid of men; and as for his constancy, though it seemed a little hurt by the message which he sent, it was not impaired by it in the least. For his faith in Christ could not but remain inviolable, as it had been founded on a particular revelation, and on the visible descent of the Spirit, accompanied with a voice from heaven, declaring him to be the Son of God. John's message, therefore, did not proceed from weakness of faith, but was the effect of discontentment, a fault which the best of men at times may fall into. 8. *But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they that wear soft clothing, (Luke, they which are gorgeously apparelled, and live delicately, are in king's courts) are in king's houses.* In this question, the austere mortified life of the Baptist is praised, and the spiritual nature of Messiah's kingdom insinuated. His forerunner did not resemble any of the officers who attend the courts of earthly princes, and consequently he himself was in no respect to be like an earthly prince. 9. *But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and more (Luke, much more) than a prophet.* John Baptist justly merited to be called a prophet, because he excelled in every thing peculiar to a prophet. He was commissioned by God, and had immediate communication with him, John i. 33. He foretold that the kingdom of heaven spoken of by Daniel was at hand. He pointed out the Messiah by revelation. He declared the terrible judgments that were to befall the people on account of their impenitence, their disbelief, and their rejecting the Messiah, Luke iii. 17. To conclude, he was more than a prophet, in as much as he was Messiah's harbinger sent to prepare the way before him, an office which clothed him with a dignity superior to that of a simple prophet; not to mention that he had the honour of baptising Messiah himself. 10. *For this is*



*be of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.* In this and the foregoing verse, Jesus signified to the people, that as they had gone out to John under the character of a prophet, and had believed in him on the best grounds, it was their duty to retain his doctrine in their minds, and to put it in practice through the whole course of their lives. 11. *Verily I say unto you, among them that are born of women, there hath not risen a \* greater (Luke, prophet) than John the Baptist; notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven, is greater than he* The least inspired teacher under the gospel dispensation is a greater prophet than John. In this latter part of the Baptist's character, our Lord tacitly condemned his mistake with respect to the gospel dispensation, which prompted him to send the angry message mentioned above.

Our Lord having thus spoken concerning John, commended the people, particularly the tax-gatherers, for having cheerfully submitted to him as a prophet sent from God. Luke vii. 29. *And all the people that heard him, (viz. John) and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John.* These are not the evangelist's words, but Christ's, as is plain from this, that the people could not now get baptism from John, though our Lord's testimony had induced them to believe in him, he being at

\* Ver. 11. *Greater than John the Baptist.*] Our Lord honoured the Baptist with the magnificent title of the greatest of all the prophets under the law, for four reasons: 1. He was the subject of ancient prophecies, and had long been expected by the people of God, under the notion of Elias, a name given him by Malachi, because he was to possess the spirit and power of Elias. See on Luke i. 17. p. 9. Thus Messiah is called David, because he was to descend from that prince, and enjoy his crown, Jer. xxx. 9. Ezek. xxxiv. 23. xxxvii. 24. Hol. iii. 5. 10. *This is he of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which, &c.* 2. His conception and birth had been accompanied with miracles. 3. When the season of his inspiration came, he was favoured with a clearer revelation concerning the Messiah, than had been enjoyed by any of the prophets under the law. 4. By his sermons he prepared the Jews for receiving the gospel, and consequently began that more excellent dispensation. But though the Baptist thus excelled all the precedent prophets, the least inspired person in the kingdom of heaven, the least apostle or preacher of the gospel, was a greater prophet than he, because, by constantly attending on Jesus, they were much better acquainted with his character, dispositions and doctrine, than the Baptist, who had only seen him transiently. Wherefore, in respect of their personal knowledge of Messiah, the apostles greatly excelled the Baptist. Farther, they were employed, not in making preparation for, but in erecting the Messiah's kingdom; hence they were greater than the Baptist, in respect of the dignity of their office. Moreover, having gifts bestowed on them to fit them for that office, far superior to his, they were greater in respect of their illumination. They had the Spirit so dwelling in them, that on all occasions they could declare the will of God infallibly, being, as it were, living oracles. To conclude, as they had likewise been the subjects of ancient oracles, Acts ii. 16. they had long been expected by the people of God.



at this time shut up in prison. Our Lord's meaning was, that while John executed his ministry, the people, particularly the publicans, justified God by receiving his baptism ; or, to express the matter differently, by believing on John, and repenting of their sins, they approved of, and complied with God's merciful counsel towards themselves, and so vindicated the divine wisdom in sending him. See Matt. xi. 19. This sense is confirmed by the parallel passage in Matthew, where our Lord expresses himself somewhat differently, but to the same purpose as in Luke. It is Matt. xi. 12. *And from the days of John the Baptist, until now, the kingdom of heaven, the dispensation which admits all persons equally, upon their faith and repentance, suffereth violence, and the violent, the publicans believing, take it by force.* 13. *For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.* 14. *And if ye will receive it, this is Elias which was for to come.* If you will believe it, this is Messiah's fore-runner, whom Malachi predicted under the name of *Elias*. Jesus added this particular concerning John, to prove his assertion in the 12th and 13th verses, concerning the abrogation of the Mosaical dispensation at the appearing of John. He was Messiah's fore-runner, and therefore the law began to wax old and vanish at his appearing. To make this connection the more plain, the Greek particle *καὶ* ought to be translated *for*, in which sense it is used often by the New Testament writers. The meaning, therefore, of the whole passage is this : Gentiles, tax-gatherers, soldiers, harlots, and others of the same stamp, persons of the most abandoned characters, whom ye look upon as having no right to become members of the Messiah's kingdom, enter into it. And this ye think a violence done to the kingdom of heaven, but in reality it is not so, because the law and the prophets, the dispensation which makes a distinction between men, was virtually set aside at the coming of John, in whose ministry the gospel began, the dispensation which admits all persons equally, upon their faith and repentance. For if ye will believe it, he is Messiah's fore-runner, whom Malachi predicted under the name of *Elias*. The words with which our Lord closed this branch of his discourse are remarkable : " He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." As Dr Clarke observes, they are a strong and general appeal unto the reason and understanding of all unprejudiced and impartial men, and an exhortation to them to use the powers of reason and understanding which God hath given them. They are highly expressive of the authority of the person who speaks, of the reasonableness, truth, and excellency of the thing that is spoken, and of the capacity which men have, and the obligations they are under, to hearken to and obey what is thus delivered unto them. Hence they are often used by Christ when he is speaking things of great importance, and which deserve the serious consideration of mankind. Matt. xi. 15. *He*  
*that*



*that bath ears to hear, let him hear.* Let him hear and understand, that the Mosaical dispensation is drawing towards a conclusion, and that a new dispensation is about to begin, into which persons of all nations and characters shall be received upon their faith and repentance, equally with the Jews.—In the next place, Jesus reprov'd the Pharisees for their resisting the evidence of the Baptist's mission. Luke vii. 30. *But the Pharisees and lawyers reject'd the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.* By calling the gospel the counsel of God, the grandest idea of it possible is given. It is nothing less than the result of the deep consideration and deliberation of God; for which reason, the crime of mens rejecting it is very atrocious. But to shew the Pharisees more plainly the perverseness of their disposition, he told them they were like children at play, who never do what their companions desire them, being peevish and displeased with every thing. Matt. xi. 16. *But whereunto shall I liken this generation?* (Luke, *The Lord said, Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation, and to what are they like?*) *It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows, 17. And saying, \* We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced, we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented.* The application of this proverb to the Pharisees, our Lord justified by observing, that the divine wisdom had tried every method proper for converting them, but in vain. For, first of all, the Baptist was sent unto them in the stern dignity of their ancient prophets; so that it was natural to think they would have revered him. Nevertheless, they rejected him altogether. Such, it seems, was the pride and malice of the Pharisees, that when they found their own ostentatious and hypocritical mortifications utterly eclipsed by the real austerities of this holy man's life, they impudently affirmed, that his living in deserts, his shunning the company of men, the coarseness of his clothing, the abstemiousness of his diet, with the other severities which he practis'd, were all the effects of madness or religious melancholy. Matt. xi. 18. *For*  
*John*

\* Ver. 17. *We have piped unto you.*] In Judea it was usual at feasts to have music of an airy kind, accompanied with dancing, Luke xv. 25. and at funerals melancholy airs, to which were joined the lamentations of persons hired for the purpose. The children therefore in that country, imitating these things in their diversions, while one band of them performed the musical part, if the other happening to be froward would not answer them by dancing or lamenting, as the game directed, it naturally gave occasion to the complaint, *We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced, &c.* which at length was turned into a proverb. The mourning airs in this proverb, fitly represent the severity of the Baptist's manners, and the disagreeableness of the doctrine of repentance, which he preached. On the other hand, the cheerful airs beautifully represent our Lord's sweet disposition, affable conversation, and engaging method of giving instruction; so that every thing was tried that could possibly have influence to bring the Jews to repent,



*John came neither eating nor drinking, (Luke, neither eating bread nor drinking wine) and they say, He hath a devil.* This method of converting the Pharisees proving unsuccessful, God sent his own Son in a more familiar manner. Jesus did not practise those mortifications which rendered the Baptist remarkable. He fared like other men, and went into mixed companies, not avoiding the society even of publicans and sinners. But neither would they hear him; for notwithstanding he maintained the strictest temperance himself, and never encouraged the vices of others, either by dissimulation or example, they attributed that free way of living to a certain looseness of disposition. 19. *The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners; \* but wisdom is justified of (Luke, all) her children.*

After reproving the Pharisees, Jesus denounced heavy judgments against Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, cities which he had often blessed with his presence. For though they had heard him preach many awakening sermons, and seen him perform many astonishing miracles, such as would have converted Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom, heathen cities infamous for their impiety, contempt of religion, pride, luxury and debauchery; (see Isa. xxiii. Ezek. xxvi. xxvii. and xxviii. chapters) yet so great was their obstinacy, that they persisted in their wickedness in spite of all he had done ~~to~~ to reclaim them. Matt. xi. 20. *Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not.* 21. *Wo unto thee, † Chorazin, wo unto thee, Bethsaida; for if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes: would have exercised the deepest re-*  

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\* Ver. 19. *But wisdom is justified of her children.*] Elser thinks this clause was spoken by the Pharisees, so would have it translated, *the doctrine is condemned by its disciples.* But though σοφία may signify a doctrine, and δικαιωθῆναι, being one of those words that have opposite senses, may be translated *is condemned*, as well as *is justified*; yet it is more natural to take the sentence as our Lord's reflection on the conduct of the Pharisees. *Wisdom is justified of her children*: all the methods of the divine providence, however offensive they may be to wicked men, do fully approve themselves as wise to those who have any love of truth and goodness, procuring from them a cheerful submission, than which a more complete vindication of the divine dispensations cannot be wished for from man. *Jensius, in Ferculo Lætariorum*, gives the words a different turn. By the children of wisdom he understands the fruits, effects, and operations of wisdom, which in all cases do most undoubtedly justify it. But this sense of the word *children*, though it may occur in poetical compositions, from whence alone Jensius draws his proofs, is quite foreign to the sacred writings.

† Matt. ver. 21. *Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum.*] Chorazin was a city of Galilee nigh to the lake. Jerome, in his book of Hebrew places, says it was about two miles distant from Capernaum. By geographers it is commonly placed between Capernaum and Bethsaida.

For the situation of Bethsaida, see on Matt. xiv. 22. § 6.

For the situation of Capernaum, see § 25.



penitance on account of their sins. For sackcloth and ashes were used by the Jews in token of the bitterest grief. See Isa. lviii. 5. Jer vi. 26 Lam ii 10 Nor were those expressions of grief and humiliation peculiar to the Jews. They were used by the Gentiles also, Jonah iii. 5. 6. 8. See on Matt. vi. 16. § 26.—Matt. xi. 22 *But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you 23. And thou Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell; for if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.* He mentions Capernaum separately by itself, and last of all, because being the place of his ordinary residence, it had been blessed with more of his sermons and miracles than any other town. Nevertheless, it abounded with wickedness of all kinds, and therefore he compared it to that city which on account of the greatness of its crimes, had been the most terrible example of the divine displeasure that ever the world had beheld. 24. *But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.* From this passage we learn two important particulars. First, that the punishments to be inflicted upon wicked men in the life to come, shall not be all equal, but in exact proportion to the demerit of the sins of each. Secondly, that great and signal punishments befalling sinners in this life, will not screen them from the wrath of God in the life to come. For Jesus Christ the judge, here declares that Sodom, though burnt up by fire and brimstone from heaven, shall suffer such dreadful things, that in speaking of the pains of the damned, he mentions this city as an example of very great punishment.

Thus Jesus reprov'd his countrymen who would not believe on him. It seems they were but a few, and those generally the lower sort of people, who embraced his doctrine, and assisted him in erecting his kingdom; nor was his religion soon to meet with a better reception in the other countries where it was to be preached; circumstances which in the eyes of common wisdom were melancholy and mortifying. But our Lord foresaw, that by the direction of God these very circumstances would become the noblest demonstrations of his personal dignity, the clearest proofs

\* Ver. 23. *Brought down to hell, &c.*] This is not to be taken literally; for as the exaltation of Capernaum into heaven was not a local, but a metaphorical exaltation, denoting the greatness of the privileges with which it was blessed, so its being thrust down into hell, (*adns*) signifies the greatness of the judgments which were to fall upon it. Our Lord denounced woes against the three cities a second time, when he was going to exercise his ministry in Judea, on which occasion the woes were fitly repeated, because they intimated that it was the incorrigible obstinacy of the inhabitants of those cities which had prevented their profiting by his instructions, and which had made him resolve to leave their country.



proofs of the excellency of his religion, and the most stupendous instances of his power, who, by such weak instruments, established his religion in every part of the habitable world, against the policy, the power, and the malice of devils and men combined to oppose it. Besides, had the great rulers and learned scribes, the nobles, the wits and geniuses been converted, it must have been prejudicial to the gospel in several respects, as such converts and teachers might probably have made the Gentiles look upon it as a trick of state; perhaps also, they would have mixed it with things foreign to its nature. Our Lord, therefore, wisely made the rejection of the gospel by the great men of the nation, and the reception of it by persons in lower stations, the matter of especial thanksgiving, both now and afterwards in Judea, Luke x. 21. Matt. xi. 25. *At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things, the doctrine of the gospel; which he had called the counsel of God, Luke vii. 30 from the wise and prudent, the chief priests, scribes, and rulers, and hast revealed them unto \* babes.* Matt. xi. 26 *Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.* Having given such an eminent proof of his divine wisdom, he reflected on the treasures thereof which lodged within himself, and rejoiced in the consciousness of his possessing them. 27. *All things are delivered unto me of my Father: every thing relating to the salvation of the world is committed to my care by God: and no man knoweth the Son, (Luke x. 22 who the Son is) but the Father: no man knoweth his character and dignity; no man knoweth what he hath done, and what he is yet to do for the salvation of the world: neither knoweth any man the Father, (Luke x. 22. who the Father is) save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him: none but the Son and his disciples fully know the perfections and counsels of the Father.* Then, warmed with the most ardent love to men, he graciously invited all that were weary of the slavery of sin, and desired to be in a state of reconciliation with God, to come to him, or believe on him; not because he expected any advantage from them, but because he both knew how to give them relief, and was willing to do it, upon no other motive however, but merely to satisfy the immense desire he had to do them

\* Ver. 25. *Babes*] (*Νηπιος*) Babes, in Scripture language, are persons whose faculties are not improved by learning, but who, to that simplicity and understanding which is purely natural, join the best dispositions of heart, such as meekness, modesty, innocence, honesty, humility, docility, and all the other engaging qualities that are to be found in children. This is plain from Matt. xviii. 3. *Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of God.* Babes therefore stand in opposition, not to men of sound judgment and reason, but to proud politicians and men of learning, who are so full of themselves that they disdain to receive instruction from others, and who make all their abilities subservient to their advancement in this world.



them good. 28. \* *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden; believe on me, and I will give you rest.* 29. *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me:* I impose nothing upon men but what I myself practise, so that you may learn all my precepts by observing my life and conversation,—particularly you may learn of me to be patient and humble, and ready to forgive injuries. *For I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls.* In my judgment I condemn the pride of your teachers, who will not vouchsafe to instruct either the poor or the profane; and in my practice I recommend both meekness and humility; meekness by bearing all kinds of injuries, and humility by condescending to do the meanest good offices to the meanest men. Besides, 30. *My yoke is easy, and my burden is light.* My doctrine and precepts (for so the word *yoke* is used even by the philosophers, as Elsner has shewed) are few, necessary, and pleasant, in which respect they are distinguished from the Mosaical ceremonies, Acts xv. 8, 9. and also from the traditional precepts of your doctors, who bind up heavy loads of duty, and lay them on mens shoulders. That Christ's yoke is easy, and his burden light, must be acknowledged, because all his affirmative precepts are as necessary to the souls of men, as food is to their bodies; and for his negative injunctions, abstinence from drink is not more expedient to persons swelled with the dropy, than they are to all who would preserve the health and vigour of their souls. The obedience, therefore, which he requires, is such a reasonable obedience as every well-informed mind must rejoice in, and the pleasures which he promises are the pleasures of goodness, the most extensive, satisfying, and durable of all pleasures, being to the mind a delicious and continual feast.

## § XLII.

\* Ver. 28. *Come unto me.*] In this invitation our Lord seems to have had his eye on Isaiah l. 4. where the Messiah is introduced, saying, *The Lord hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary.* For his having all things delivered to him of the Father, is parallel to the Lord's giving him the tongue of the learned; and his inviting all who labour and are heavy laden, is the end mentioned by the prophet for which the tongue of the learned was given him—*That I should know how to speak, &c.* This I suppose is the reason, that many critics by *the rest* offered in this invitation, understand that freedom from the burdensome services of the law, which Christ has granted to men through the promulgation of the gospel, termed, in the prophecy, *a speaking a word in season to him that is weary.* And it must be owned, that this interpretation is favoured by the subsequent clause, in which men are invited to take on them Christ's yoke, from the consideration that it is easy in comparison of Moses's yoke, and his burden, from the consideration that it is light in comparison of the ceremonial precepts of the law. There is no reason, however, for confining the *rest of the soul* here offered, to that particular privilege of the Christian religion. It is more natural to think, that it comprehends therewith all the blessings of the gospel whatsoever.



*Jesus dines with Simon the Pharisee in Capernaum, and a woman is anointed with fragrant oil for the first time.*  
 Luke vii. 36,—50. See § 110. 125.

WHEN Jesus had finished these discourses, a Pharisee named Simon, who it seems was a man of better disposition than the generality of his sect, invited him to dinner. Luke vii. 36. *And of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat.* Jesus accepted the invitation, and went with him, never shunning any opportunity that offered of doing good.—37. *And behold \*a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, with a design to testify her respect for Jesus.* The character given of this woman, that she *was a sinner*, renders it probable that she had formerly been a harlot: But her action on this occasion proves that she was now awakened to a sense of her folly. She is said to have lived *in the city*; the evangelist means Capernaum, the place of our Lord's ordinary residence, which is often described in that general way. Probably she was acquainted at the Pharisee's house, for she got easy access even into the room where the company was sitting. Being come in therefore, she placed herself behind Jesus, and from a deep conviction of her many sins, and of the obligations she lay under to him for bringing her to a sense of them, she shed tears in such abundance, that they trickled down on his feet, which were then bare.

Ver. 37. *A woman in the city which was a sinner.*] It is generally supposed, that the woman who anointed our Lord in the house of Simon, was the who in the gospels is called Mary Magdalene. But I know of no reason for the opinion, excepting that Mary Magdalene is mentioned by Luke at the beginning of his next chapter, as our Lord's attendant, and one out of whom he had cast seven devils. Some indeed attempt to prove it out of the Talmud, which speaks of a lewd woman called *Mury Megaddela*, or *the plaiter*, viz. of *bair*, an epithet which perhaps was given to all prostitutes in those times, on account of their nicety in point of dress. But this has no relation to the name Magdalene. Mary Magdalene seems rather to have been a woman of high station and opulent fortune, being mentioned by Luke even before Joanna, the wife of so great a man as Herod's steward, ch. viii. 2. Besides, the other evangelists, when they have occasion to speak of our Lord's female friends, commonly assign the first place to Mary Magdalene. She was called *μαγδαλα*, the *Magdalene* or *Magdalite*, probably from Magdala, the place of her nativity, a town situated somewhere beside the lake, and mentioned, Matt. xv. 39.

[Feet, which were then bare.] Neither Jews nor Romans wore stockings; and as for their shoes or sandals, they always put them off when they took meat; for at meals they did not sit on chairs as we do, but lay on couches covered with stuffs, the quality whereof was suitable to the circumstances of the entertainer. These customs are alluded to in the law for the passover, (Exod. xii. 11.) which orders the Jews to depart from their ordinary way, and to eat the passover standing, with their loins girded, their shoes on their feet, and their staff in their hand.



bare. When the woman took notice that her tears had wetted Christ's feet, she immediately wiped them with the hairs of her head, then kissed them (see on John xx. 16. § 151.) and anointed them with the sweet scented ointment she had brought. Luke vii. 38. *And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.* In the eastern countries, at entertainments, they poured fragrant oils on the heads of such guests as they designed particularly to honour. Very probably, therefore, this woman when she came in, designed to anoint Jesus in the usual manner. Nevertheless, being exceedingly humbled on account of her former wicked life, she durst not use so much freedom with him; but she poured it on his feet, and thereby shewed at once both great love and great humility. The Pharisee seeing what was done, immediately concluded that Jesus could not be a prophet. 39 *Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who, and what manner of woman this is that touched him: for she is a sinner.* Instead of allowing her to anoint, or even to touch him, he would certainly expel her from his presence forthwith, as the tradition of the elders directs in such cases. But though Simon did not speak out, his thoughts were not hid from Christ, who, to shew him that he was a prophet, and that he knew not only the characters of men, but the inward and invisible state of their minds, conversed with him immediately upon the subject of his thoughts. The scope indeed of what he said, was to convince Simon how absurdly he reasoned. Nevertheless, Jesus did not expose him before the company, by making what he said within himself public, but with great delicacy pointed out the unreasonableness of his thoughts to Simon alone, without letting the guests at table know any thing of the matter. 40. *And Jesus answering, said unto him, Simon, I have something to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on.* 41. *There was a certain creditor, which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.* 42. *And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me, therefore, which of them will love him most?* 43. *Simon answered and said, I suppose that he to whom he forgave most.* And he said unto him, *Thou hast rightly judged.* 44. *And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, \* thou gavest me no water for my feet: but*

\* Verse 44. *Thou gavest me no water for my feet.*] These words sound somewhat harsh to us, who live in the western parts of the world, where servants perform all menial offices. Nevertheless, they will be found agreeable to the nicest propriety of good breeding, if the manners of the eastern countries are considered. There persons of the highest rank did not



*but she bath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head.* 45. *Tbou gavest me no kiss ; but this woman, since the time I came in, bath not ceased to kiss my feet.* 46 *Mine head with oil thou didst not anoint ; but this woman bath anointed my feet with ointment.* The kindness which this sinful woman shewed to Jesus, was very extraordinary. Therefore, as he had all the softer and finer passions of the human nature in their perfection, he was greatly moved with the tenderness of her love, and in a very obliging manner expressed the sense he had of it. For in the hearing of all the guests, he recounted particularly and with approbation, the several actions by which she had testified her respect. And because by accident she had happened to do what some might think a rude thing, had wetted his feet with her tears, he gave it an agreeable turn, well knowing from what spring her tears had flowed. That the company might know it was not offensive to him, he called it a washing of his feet, a compliment which was usually paid to guests on their coming into a house, especially after travelling, but which Simon, some how or other, had happened to neglect. Moreover, by running the comparison between her behaviour towards him in the other instances, and Simon's, he did not so much complain of the latter for failing in point of civility, as insinuate that the woman had out-done him. At the same time, that nobody might put a wrong construction upon her behaviour, he declared that her regard for him proceeded purely from a sense of the favour he had done her in bringing her to repentance, and in raising her to the hope of pardon. For though he had not yet given her any express intimation of the pardon of her sins, yet having made her sensible of them by his sermons, and raised her to the grace of true repentance, without doubt she was<sup>o</sup> assured of her pardon by the general doctrine of the gospel, and particularly by the promise of rest which Jesus had lately made to all weary and heavy laden sinners. But the favour of pardon bearing a proportion to the multitude and greatness of the sins pardoned, this woman,

not think it below them to honour their guests, by performing offices of this kind to them. Thus Gen. xviii 7. we read, that on the arrival of the three angels, " Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf, and took butter and milk, and the calf which his servant had dressed, and set it before them, and he stood by them under the tree," to serve them, " and they did eat." Thus also in the 9th Iliad, v. 205.

Achilles at the genial feast presides,

The parts transfixes, and with skill divides :

Mean while Patroclus sweats the fire to raise, &c.

Dr Shaw, in his Travels, p. 301. tells us, these customs subsist among the eastern nations to this day, and particularly among the Arabs, who are remarkable for retaining their ancient manners ; and that the person who first presents to give a stranger welcome and wash his feet, is the master of the family. For as they still walk bare-footed, or with sandals only, this piece of civility is absolutely necessary.



woman, who was a notorious sinner, could not but love Jesus ardently, who had converted her, and given her good hope that God would be merciful to her. 47. *Wherefore, I say unto thee, her sins, which are many, are forgiven; namely by me, for the reasoning will not hold without this.* Wherefore, Jesus on this occasion, in the hearing of Simon and all the guests, plainly assumed to himself the prerogative of the Son of God, the right of forgiving mens sins. Accordingly, the guests understood him in this sense, as appears from the reflection which they made upon his speech (ver. 49.) *for she loved much.* The clause *οτι αγαπησι πολυ* may be better translated, *therefore she has loved much*, *οτι* being put here for *διουτι*. *Her sins which are many are forgiven, therefore she has loved much.* Accordingly it is added, *but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.* Our Lord did not make the application of this parable more directly, but left Simon to do it, because he could not but see that if love invites love, and merits a return, Jesus would have been ungenerous, had he treated this woman with rude insolence. Having expressed greater love to him, she deserved higher returns of gratitude from him than even Simon himself; for which reason he was not to blame when he allowed her to wash his feet with tears, and wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kiss them, and anoint them with sweet scented ointment. Jesus having thus vindicated the woman, spake to her, and kindly assured her that her sins, of which he knew she had truly repented, were actually forgiven. 48. *And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.—49. And they that sat at meat with him, began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also?* They were exceedingly offended at the power which he claimed. But Jesus, contemning their malicious murmurings, repeated his assurance by telling the woman that her faith had saved her from the punishment of her sins, and bidding her depart in peace, that is, impressed with a strong sense of the love of God, and filled with the satisfaction which naturally arises from that attainment. 50. *And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.*

§ XLIV. *Pious women supply Jesus with money, and accompany him to the passover.* Luke viii. 1,—3.

THE day after our Lord dined with Simon (*οι τω καθεξης*) he and his twelve apostles departed from Capernaum, with an intention to go up to Jerusalem to the passover. He did not however keep the direct road. He set out early, and proposed to preach in many towns and villages by the way. Luke viii. 1. *And it came to pass afterward that he went throughout every city and village preaching, and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God; that is, the joyful tidings of God's reconcilable-*

ness



to men, of the necessity of reformation, and of the acceptances of repentance, even in the chief of sinners. His going through the cities and villages to preach, are the terms made use of by the evangelists, when they describe his departure from Capernaum, the place of his ordinary residence. Therefore, being called on this occasion, it is highly probable that Simon the Pharisee, with whom our Lord dined the day before he departed to preach in the cities and villages, lived in Capernaum. And as this latter gave him the invitation immediately after he had finished the discourse occasioned by the Baptist's message, Jesus must have been in Capernaum, or near it, when that message came to him. By the harmony, it appears that Jesus now departed from Capernaum, in order to go up to the passover. Luke informs us, that in this journey he was accompanied also by certain pious women, who in all probability were going likewise to the feast, and who supplied him with money, not on the present occasion only, but as often as he stood in need of it. Of this number were Mary Magdalene, a lady of the first rank in Judea, out of whom he had cast seven devils, and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward. Mark agrees with Luke in the circumstance of our Lord's being supported by the charity of his friends. For speaking of the women who were present at Christ's crucifixion, he says, ch. xv. 41. that when Jesus "was in Galilee, they followed him and ministered unto him of their substance." The evangelists no where else tell us, in what way our Lord and his apostles were supported. The reason why a lady of Joanna's quality had become an attendant of Christ, is assigned by Luke. She was one of the women which had been healed by him of evil spirits and infirmities. *And the twelve were with him. 2. And certain women which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary Magdalene, (See on Luke vii. 37. § 43.) out of whom went seven devils, 3. And Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance.*

## SECOND PASSOVER.

§ XLV. *The infirm man at Bethesda is cured* John v. 1,—47.

ABOUT this time happened the feast of the Jews which John has given the history of, chap. v. 1. *After this there was a feast (namely the feast) of the Jews.* This in all probability was the feast of passover. *And Jesus went up to Jerusalem.* Luke's general description of our Lord's journeying, mentioned in the preceding section, will easily comprehend his journey to and from Jerusalem, on occasion of this feast, as a similar passage in Mark comprehends his journey to and from the third passover. See § 43. 37. The feast under consideration is supposed to have been



the passover, because that solemnity was called *the feast*, (*ἡ ἑορτή*) by way of eminence, Matt. xxvii. 15. Mark xv. 6. and because immediately after it, we find the disciples on the Sabbath in the fields, rubbing the ears, probably of barley, a kind of grain which was always fit for reaping at the passover. See the next section.

Within the walls of Jerusalem, near the sheep-gate mentioned Neh. iii. 1. \* there was a public bath, which from its five porches (*σολαι*, porticos, piazzas, or covered walks) seems to have been of a pentagonal form, the porticos being probably built around it. This bath, for its singular usefulness, was fitly called Bethesda, *the house of mercy*, a bathing place with porticos or covered walks being a most agreeable and salutary building in those warm climates, where excessive heat was not only troublesome, but noxious to health. John v. 2. *Now there is in Jerusalem by the sheep market, a pool which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches.—3. In these, in the porticos of this bath, lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. 4. For an angel went down † at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water; that is, moved*

\* There was a public bath.] That the word *κολυμβήθρα* signifies a bath, is plain from the sense of its primitive *κολυμβᾶν*, to swim, Acts xxvii. 43. and from Joseph. Ant. xv. 3. who uses it to denote the baths at Jericho. Wherefore, their opinion who affirm that this pool served for washing the sheep designed for sacrifice, before they were driven into the temple, and the entrails also of the beasts sacrificed there, seems to be without foundation. Besides, it is inconsistent with the situation of Bethesda, near the sheep gate in the south-east wall of the city, or according to the compilers of the Universal History, in that which was on the north east, a great way from the temple.

† Ver. 4. *At a certain season.*] *κατὰ καιρὸν*, by times, or as some understand it, *at that season*, the season of the feast mentioned ver. 1. confining the miracle of the pool to this particular feast. See Num. ix. 6, 7. LXX. For since the evangelist does not say, that the waters of Bethesda had their sanative quality at any other feast, we are at liberty to make what supposition seems most convenient. Perhaps the silence of Philo and Josephus upon this miracle, may induce some to think, that it happened only at one passover. For though many infirm people lay in Bethesda, if the angel, as is probable, descended frequently during that solemnity, the miracle would be no sooner known, than multitudes would come and wait at the pool, to be cured by the moving waters. However, if the number of the sick who gathered on this occasion, and the phrase *κατὰ καιρὸν*, shall incline any to believe, that the waters of Bethesda had an healing quality at other passovers also, the silence of the writers before mentioned needs not be much regarded, it being well known that they have omitted greater transactions, which they had as good an opportunity to know; I mean that multitude and variety of miracles which our Lord performed in the course of his ministry. That the waters of Bethesda should at this time have obtained a miraculous healing quality, was without doubt in honour of the personal appearance of the Son of God on earth. Perhaps it was intended to shew, that Ezekiel's vision of waters issuing out of the sanctuary,



moved it in a sensible manner. *Whoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in, was made whole of whatsoever disease he had* \*, was cured; however inveterate, obstinate and incurable his disease might be. Among the crowds which lay in the porticos of Bethesda, there was one who had an infirmity, probably a paralytic disorder, thirty-eight years. John v. 5. *And a certain man was there which had an infirmity thirty and eight years.* The length and greatness of this man's affliction, well known to Jesus, as appears from ver. 6. together with his poverty, ver. 7. were sufficient reasons for our Lord's making choice of him to experience the mercy of his healing power, a power infinitely superior to the virtue of the waters, while he let the rest remain in their affliction. Had our Lord at this time restored some of them to health, he would not have acted contrary to the general account which the evangelists give of his goodness on other occasions, viz. "That he healed all who came to him." For such diseased persons, as left their habitations with a persuasion of his power and benignity, were fit objects of his mercy, while the sick at Bethesda were no more so than the other sick throughout the country, whom he could have cured barely by willing it, had he so pleased. They had no knowledge of him, or, if they knew aught about him, they had no just notion of his power, and were expecting relief from another quarter. When Jesus came to the person on whom he chose to manifest his power, he asked him if he desired to be made whole? 6. *When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he said unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?* This question he proposed, that the man might have an opportunity of declaring his case in the hearing of the multitude, (See verse 13.) because such a declaration tended to make the miracle more conspicuous. It seems he designed to rouse the attention of the inhabitants of the capital, resolving to lay the evidences of his mission before them, in the discourse which this miracle was to occasion.

was about to be fulfilled, ch. xlvii. of which waters it is said, ver. 9. *They shall be healed, and every thing shall live whithersoever the river cometh.*

\* This fourth verse is not indeed in the Cambridge MS. which formerly was Beza's, nor in one or two more of great authority. See Dr Mill's judgment of it, in that part of his prolegomena, to which he refers the reader in his note on the text. But though it should be rejected, the difficulty for which some would have it cancelled, remains still; because the seventh verse implies, that cures were performed in this pool, and that only one at a time was cured, and consequently that these cures were miraculous. If so, it is as easy to conceive that an angel moved the water and gave it its healing quality, as to fancy those cures were performed miraculously any other way.—Grotius thinks that the angel is said to have descended, not because he was ever seen to do so, but because the Jews were persuaded that God brought such things to pass by the ministrations of angels; so that from the violent motion of the water, and the cure following it, the presence of an angel was with reason supposed.



caſion.—The impotent perſon answered ſorrowfully, 7. *Sir, I have no man when the water is troubled to put me into the pool; but while I am coming, another ſteppeth down before me; he was ſo deſtitute, that he had neither friend nor relation to wait on him or to aſſiſt him, and ſo poor that he could hire nobody to do him theſe offices.*—8 *Jeſus ſaith unto him, Riſe, take up thy bed and walk.* Though it was the Sabbath day, and the doctors affirmed, that the bearing of any burden was a profanation of the holy reſt, Jeſus ordered the man to carry his bed away, becauſe it was fit that the miracle ſhould be rendered indubitable, by the ſuddenneſs and perfection of the cure, ſhewed in the vigorous exertion of the man's ſtrength. Beſides, when the people who on the Sabbath ceaſed from working, met the man as they were walking about, and reproved him for carrying away his bed, he could not avoid telling them what had happened. It was therefore a very proper method of making ſo ſignal a miracle univerſally known. John v. 9. *And immediately the man was made whole; he was made whole all of a ſudden.* So that the cure being effected in an inſtant, while he was not expecting any ſuch favour, nor knew to whom he owed it, (verſe 13.) nobody can pretend that the power of imagination contributed thereto in the leaſt degree.—*And took up his bed and walked* The paralytic finding himſelf whole, did not object againſt his Saviour's command, though contrary to the precepts of the doctors. He roſe up immediately, and by carrying away his bed with uncommon vigour, ſhewed the greatneſs and perfection of his cure.—*And on the ſame day was the ſabbath, i. e.* either the firſt holy convocation in the feaſt of unleavened bread, that is, the morrow after the paſſover ſolemnity, which was one of the greateſt Sabbaths, (John xix. 31.) or the ordinary Sabbath happening in the paſſover week, and conſequently the day on which the diſciples plucked the ears of corn, to be mentioned in the next ſection. It is remarkable, that the Jews who met the man did not converſe with him upon his cure, though in all probability many of them knew he had been long infirm, but upon the unlawfulness of carrying away his bed. 10. *The Jews therefore ſaid unto him that was cured, It is the ſabbath day, it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed.* See the carrying of burdens on the Sabbath prohibited, Jer. xvii. 21, 22. 11. *He answered them, He that made me whole; he that with a word reſtored my ſtrength in an inſtant, the ſame ſaid unto me, Take up thy bed and walk:* He meant, that being a worker of miracles and a prophet, his injunctions could not poſſibly be ſinful. Nevertheless, ſuch was the wickedneſs or ſtupidity of the Jews, that they did not aſk who had cured him, but with an angry tone of voice required him to tell them who had bid him profane the Sabbath. 12. *Then aſked they him, What man is that which ſaid unto thee, Take up thy bed and walk.* To this he made



made no reply, for Jesus having conveyed himself away from the multitude, that they might not lay violent hands upon him, neither the man that was cured, nor the multitude knew who had performed the miracle. 13. *And he that was healed wist not who it was, for Jesus had \* conveyed himself away, a multitude being in that place.*

Some time after this, Jesus happening to be in the temple, found the man whom he had cured at Bethesda. Wherefore, to render the favour he had done him complete, he took that opportunity to put him in mind of his having brought the distemper upon himself by his wicked courses; for he desired him to abstain from sinning for the future, lest some heavier judgment should be inflicted on him. John v. 14. *Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold thou art made whole, sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.—15. The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus which had made him whole* Overjoyed to have discovered the author of his cure, he went away and innocently informed the Jews of it; perhaps because he thought it his duty to give his benefactor the honour of the miracle, and believed the Jews would have been glad to see so great a prophet. But instead of that, they attacked Jesus tumultuously in the temple, and it may be, tried him before the sanhedrim with a view to kill him, because, as they imagined, he had profaned the Sabbath by performing a cure upon it, and by ordering the person cured to carry away his bed. 16. *And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day.* By *the Jews* here, we are to understand the rulers. This I think plain from ver. 33. where Jesus speaking to the persons who sought to kill him, (ver. 18.) says unto them, “Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth.” But the messengers that were sent to John, we are told were priests and Levites, (John i. 19.) persons of character, who would not have undertaken the office, unless by the appointment of the rulers, called on that occasion as well as here, *the Jews*, (John i. 19.) Moreover, the apology which Jesus now made for himself, is such as was proper to be pronounced before the most capable judges, the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders. For it is the most regular defence of his character and mission that is any where to be found in the gospels, comprehending the principal arguments in behalf of both, and setting them forth with the greatest strength of reason, clearness of method, and conciseness of expression.

**Jesus**

\* Ver. 13. *Conveyed himself away.*] Casaubon observes, that the word *σπύρον*, by which the evangelist expresses Christ's escape, being a metaphor borrowed from swimming, signifies, that he glided through the multitude, leaving no trace behind him of the way he had taken.



Jesus began his defence with shewing the unreasonable-  
 ableness of their displeasure with him, because he had restored  
 the infirm man to health on the Sabbath day. He told them,  
 that in performing cures on the Sabbath, he only imitated his  
 Father, who wrought every day of the week in doing good to  
 men by his unwearied providence. For on the Sabbaths, as on  
 other days, through the invisible operation of his power, Al-  
 mighty God supports the whole frame of nature, and carries on  
 the motions of the heavens, upon which the vicissitudes of day  
 and night, and of the seasons depend, so necessary to the produc-  
 tion of food, with the other means of life. John v. 17. *But Je-  
 sus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.*  
 As the Jews built their observation of the Sabbath upon God's  
 having rested thereon from the works of creation, this argument  
 was decisive. Nevertheless, the apology offended them exceed-  
 ingly; for they thought he claimed a peculiar and proper relation  
 to God, and by asserting that he acted like God, set himself on  
 a level with God. 18. *Therefore the Jews sought the more to  
 kill him, because he not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also  
 that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.* This  
 conclusion Jesus did not deny, but shewed, that in all things he acted  
 agreeably to the will of God, and that he was equal in power to  
 God, doing whatever he saw the Father do, an honour which  
 flowed to him from the immense love of the Father, and which  
 was a clear, certain, convincing proof of the Father's love.  
 19. *Then answered Jesus, and said unto them, Verily, verily, I  
 say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth  
 the Father do; for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth  
 the Son likewise.* 20. *For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth  
 him all things that himself doeth;—and he will shew him greater  
 works than these, that ye may marvel:* will enable him to do  
 greater miracles than any he has done hitherto, and which, though  
 they may not convince, will certainly astonish you, and make it  
 impossible for you to gainsay him, at least with any shew of rea-  
 son. 21. *For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth  
 them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will:* the Son has  
 power, not only to heal the sick, but to raise the dead. Nay,  
 he assured them that *the power of judging the world*, that is, of  
 executing judgments temporal and eternal on his enemies, was  
 committed unto him, in order that all men should honour the  
 Son even as they honour the Father; honour him as the Maker  
 and Governor of the world, by yielding to him the homage of  
 faith, and love, and obedience; and that they might be rewarded  
 therefore with everlasting life. So that being appointed of the  
 Father, judge universal, they who did not honour him, did not  
 honour the Father. John v. 22. *For the Father judgeth no man,  
 but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:* 23. *That all*  
*men*



men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him. 24. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that beareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life. Such a person hath a right to everlasting life, and shall not be condemned by me the judge at the last day. Nay, he is so sure of escaping condemnation, and of obtaining eternal life, that he may be said to have passed already from death to life. But to convince them that he was able to quicken whom he would, he bade them consider the effects of his power, which they had already seen in the resurrection of two dead persons to life, viz. Jairus's daughter, and the widow of Nain's son; and which they were yet to see in the resurrection of Lazarus, and perhaps of others not mentioned in the history. 25. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is; the time is now, as you yourselves well know, when the dead shall bear the voice of the Son of God, and they that bear shall live. For you cannot but have heard, that I have raised two persons from the dead already. 26. For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself: hath bestowed this honour upon him, to quicken or raise (see ver. 21.) what dead person soever he pleases, and that by his own power; in which respect our Lord differed from the prophets, and all the other messengers of God who raised the dead, neither at their own pleasure, nor by their own power. 27. And hath given him authority \* to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man; hath conferred on him, not only the honour of giving life to the dead by his own power, but authority also to punish the living with death, and that because he has humbled himself so low as to become the Son of man, Philip. ii. 9,—11. The power of giving life to the dead, our Lord frequently made use of while on earth, but never the power of punishing men with death. The apostles indeed exercised it sometimes. But he seems now to have had the destruction of Jerusalem more particularly in his eye, an exercise of judgment which he constantly ascribed to himself. 28. Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall bear his voice; 29. And shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation. Be not surprised at my saying that the Son has power to raise a few particular persons

\* Ver. 27. To execute judgment also.] The Syriac version, Chrysostom, Theophylact, and Euthymius, put a full stop after the words *αὐτῷ ἐξουσίαν*, and join the clause, *because he is the Son of man*, to the next verse, thus, *Because he is the Son of man, marvel not at this.* And Chrysostom in particular affirms, that Paul of Samosatena contrived the pointing now in use. Yet it seems to be the true pointing, the other making a very harsh ungrammatical construction.



lons from the dead, and authority to inflict punishment on a few particular offenders. There is a far greater power committed to him, even that of raising all men at the last day, and of judging and rewarding them according to their works. Now in this judgment I will not act absolutely or arbitrarily, but according to the laws of equity, unalterably established by my Father, so that I shall not act therein so properly by my own, as by my Father's authority. 30. *I can of mine ownself do nothing ; as I hear I judge :* in allusion to human courts, where the judges found their sentences upon the testimony of witnesses, and the laws of the country. Yet the expression by no means implies, that our Lord at the great day shall receive information from any one whatsoever, concerning the persons he is to judge. Having been himself privy to their actions, he needs no evidence, but knows all things that ever were thought, said, or done by mankind, from the beginning to the end of time, fully and certainly. *And my judgment is just ;* not only because it is thus a judgment according to truth and equity, but likewise, *because I seek not mine own will, but the will of my Father who hath sent me ;* I have no interest to pursue, no inclination to fulfil, different from that of my Father.

These were very grand assertions of his own dignity. But he did not require his hearers to believe them, merely on the authority of his own testimony ; a circumstance by which Jesus Christ, the only Son and greatest messenger of the true God, is distinguished from Mahomet, and all other impostors whatever. He told them that he had the testimony of John, given him in the hearing of their own deputies. But at the same time he observed, that the truth of his mission did not depend merely on human testimony, though it was given by one who was a burning and shining light, and in whom they greatly rejoiced, because the prophetic Spirit which had so long ceased seemed to be again revived in him. John v 31. *If I alone bear witness of myself, my witness is not true.* That the word *alone* is pertinently supplied here, seems plain from what follows, not to mention that it reconciles this passage with John viii. 14. § 77. which see. 32. *There is another that beareth witness of me, and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true* 33 *Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth.* 34. *But I receive not testimony from man only :* that is, the truth of my mission does not depend merely on human testimony, see ver 36. *But these things I say, that ye may be saved :* I say them to induce you to believe, that ye may be saved 35. *He was a burning and a shining light, and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.* Some from this latter clause infer, that the Baptist was now dead. Yet he does not seem to have been killed till a little before the third passover. The reason is, the miracle of the loaves



leaves performed in the desert of Bethsaida immediately after  
 word was brought of John's death, is said to have happened a  
 little before that feast, John vi. 4. If so, our Lord's meaning  
 is, that John was a burning and a shining light, an illustrious  
 prophet, not while he lay in prison, but while his ministry last-  
 ed; for during his imprisonment his light may be said to have  
 been extinguished. Accordingly it is added, *And ye were wil-*  
*ling to rejoice in his light for a season*; ye hearkened to him with  
 great pleasure, till his credit was impaired in your estimation  
 by his imprisonment. Farther, he told them that he had the  
 testimony of one infinitely greater than John, even the testimony  
 of the Father, who was continually bearing witness to him, by  
 the many miracles which he empowered him to perform, and  
 who had given him a peculiar and direct testimony at his bap-  
 tism, by declaring from heaven in a grand, audible, articulate  
 voice, that he was *his beloved Son*; which voice many then li-  
 ving had heard, and no doubt remembered. 36. *But I have*  
*greater witness than that of John; for the works which the Fa-*  
*ther hath given me to finish, the same works that I do bear witness*  
*of me that the Father hath sent me.* 37 *And the Father himself*  
*which hath sent me, hath born witness of me.* For this latter wit-  
 nesses he appealed to themselves, Οὐτε φωνὴ αὐτοῦ ἀκηκοατε ποτε οὐτε  
 ὄψιν αὐτοῦ ὤπαυτε, which in our translation runs thus, *Ye have*  
*neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.* But the  
 proper translation seems to be interrogatively, *Have ye never at*  
*any time heard his voice, or seen his shape?* The word ὄψιν, trans-  
 lated in this passage *shape*, signifies any thing in a person that  
 appears to the eye, by which he is distinguished from others;  
 and therefore the form of his countenance, as well as the shape  
 of his body. Many of the ancient Jews had heard the voice of  
 God at Sinai, when the law was given, Deut. iv. 12. 33 And  
 though it is said there that they saw no *similitude*, (LXX. ὁμοίωμα)  
 the meaning is not, that they saw no corporeal appearance, for  
 they saw fire and smoke, ver. 15. but that they saw no resem-  
 blance, no figure or likeness of any thing in the heavens above,  
 or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth, which  
 the heathens worshipped as God. This fire which the Israelites  
 saw on Sinai, was the symbol of the divine presence, as was the  
 pillar of fire, and cloud of smoke which attended them in their  
 journeyings through the wilderness. Hence, because Moses was  
 often admitted to a clear and near view of this fire, he is said to  
 have "beheld the similitude of the Lord," and to have "spoken  
 with God mouth to mouth, even apparently," (1<sup>st</sup> αἰδ.) Numb.  
 xii. 8. By parity of reason, as often as God manifested his pre-  
 sence in the symbol of *light* or *fire*, as at Christ's baptism, that  
 light might be called his *shape* or *similitude* (αἶδος αὐτοῦ). And all  
 who beheld that glorious appearance, as the multitude did at



Christ's baptism, might be said to have seen (*ιδεε*) *the similitude of God*. And as for hearing the voice of God, it was no impossible thing, the whole nation having heard God speak at Sinai. However, it was not this which our Lord had now in his eye, but the voice of God uttered at his baptism, which many of the Jews to whom he spake may have heard, and which the rest may have been informed of by witnesses, whose testimony they could not disbelieve. John v. 38. *Και το λογον αουτε κα εχτει μενοντα εν υμιν, Yet ye have not his word remaining in you ;* so the translation should run, the sense being this, Though God spake to you from heaven concerning me at my baptism, and in order to impress you the deeper with what he said, shewed you his face, yet you are not duly affected with what he said, neither do you entertain it in your minds as you ought to do. *Οτι δε απιστευετε κατω, ταυτα υμεις ο πιστωται, For you do not believe on him whom he hath sent.* In this passage, therefore, there is a plain allusion to the descent of the Spirit on our Lord at his baptism, and to the voice from heaven, which with a thundering noise sounding through the sky, declared him with great majesty, to be God's beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased. But because the Jews were exceedingly averse to acknowledge Jesus for their Messiah, notwithstanding the evidences of his mission were so unexceptionable, he desired them, for farther proof, to search their own Scriptures, and particularly the writings of the prophets, which, said he, is certainly your duty, because these writings, as you justly suppose, contain the knowledge of eternal life, and therefore the knowledge of Messiah. And I can with confidence refer you to them, knowing that they confirm my pretensions in the most ample manner, the characters of the Messiah pointed out by them, being all fulfilled in my person. 39. \* *Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me* 40. *And (και, but) ye will not come to me that ye might have life.* Moreover, he insinuated that the proofs of his mission were as full and clear as possible, being supported by the actions of his life, which in all points agreed with his doctrine. For in no instance whatever did he seek the applause of men, or affect secular power ; but was always innocent and humble, though he knew these qualities rendered him little in the

\* Ver. 39. *Search the Scriptures.*] Le Clerc, L'Enfant, Vitrings, Raphe-  
lius, &c. contend, that *αυτων* is in the present tense. *Ye search the Scrip-  
tures, because in them ye think ye have eternal life,* the directions of heaven  
for obtaining it ; *now are they which testify of me.* 40. *Yet ye will not come  
to me that ye might have life.* The common translation however is fully as  
agreeable to the scope of the passage ; for having told them that they  
would find abundant proofs of his mission in the Scriptures, he observed  
that their want of faith was not owing to any deficiency in the proofs of  
his mission, but to the wickedness and obstinacy of their own disposi-  
tions.



the eyes of persons void of the love of God, who expected to see their Messiah adorned with great secular glory. 41. *I receive not honour from men.* 42. *But I know you that ye have not the love of God in you.* This humility of spirit, and conformity of life with his doctrine, as well as the other evidences of his mission, our Lord justly termed *a coming to the Jews in his Father's name*, or agreeably to his will, signified anciently in the Scriptures of the prophets. Nevertheless, because such a Messiah was by no means the object of their expectation, they would not receive him. Whereas, if any other person *came to them in his own name*, that is, without a commission from God, they would joyfully embrace him, provided he assumed the majesty of a king, and promised temporal bounties to his followers. Of this infatuation the Jews gave many proofs during their wars with the Romans, and a little before the destruction of Jerusalem. For then many impostors arose, pretending to be Messiah, and promising them deliverance, by which they drew away great multitudes, as their own historian Josephus informs us. 43. *I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not. If another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.* This their infidelity was owing in a great measure to their pride. They who had all along preached glorious things concerning the empire and grandeur of the Messiah, would not ascribe that august character to a mere teacher, who was destitute even of the ordinary advantages of birth, fortune, and erudition; because it would have been such a confession of ignorance and unskilfulness in the Scriptures, as must have exposed them to the contempt of those whom they had misled, (see John vii. 49. 52.) 44. *How can ye believe which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?* How can such persons as you believe in me, whose character and station are entirely different from what you have all along told the people the Scriptures teach concerning Messiah? This confession of your own ignorance is not to be expected from you, who in all your actions seek the praise of men, Matt: xxiii. 5. and not the praise of God, which is the only true praise, and is to be obtained by a steady regard to truth and virtue, in opposition to all earthly passions whatever. To conclude, he told them they were not to imagine that in rejecting him they sinned against no person but him, and that he alone would accuse them to the Father for their infidelity. Moses, through whose law they trusted to have salvation, was likewise dishonoured by it, in as much as he wrote of him under the names of *the Seed of Abraham, Sileb, and a Prophet like to himself*, whom God would raise up unto them from among their brethren, and whom he commanded them to hear. Wherefore, seeing they refused to believe on him, Moses would accuse them as guilty of disbelieving his writings. 45. *Do not think that I* (only)



(only) will accuse you to the Father; there is one that accuses you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. 46. For had ye believed Moses ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me: had you believed the writings of Moses, which are daily read in your synagogues, you would have believed me; for these writings describe me, not by types and figures only, but by particular and direct prophecies. See Gen xii. 3. xxii. 18. xlix. 10. Deut. xviii. 15. 47. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words? Since you do not believe the testimony of your own lawgiver, I have no reason to be surprised that you do not credit me upon my own testimony. Thus Jesus asserted his own personal dignity, as the Son of God, and Judge of the world; at the same time he proposed the evidences of his mission from God, with such strength of reason, perspicuity and brevity, as nothing can equal.

§ XLVI. *After the second Passover the disciples pluck the ears of corn on the Sabbath, in some field nigh to Jerusalem.* Mat. xii. 1,—8. Mark ii. 23,—28. Luke vi. 1,—5.

UPON the first second-day Sabbath, that is, the ordinary Sabbath happening in the passover week, probably the very Sabbath that was honoured with the cure of the paralytic who lay in Bethesda, Jesus and his disciples passed through the corn fields near Jerusalem, attended by some of the Pharisees, whose curiosity prompted them to mix with the crowd on this occasion, in expectation of seeing more miracles. These no doubt they proposed to examine with the greatest accuracy, as well as to watch Jesus while he performed them, that they might detect whatever, as they vainly imagined, was false in them. Or if no miracle was performed, they hoped to find him behaving on the Sabbath, in a manner inconsistent with the holy character which he assumed. Accordingly, they first found fault with his disciples; for on seeing them pluck the ears of corn, and eat as they walked, they reprov'd them, and complained of them to their Master; not for having taken what they had no right to, the law authorising them to do this, Deut. xxiii. 25. but for having broken the Sabbath by servile work, such as they supposed plucking and rubbing the ears to be. Luke vi. 1. *And it came to pass on the second Sabbath after the first, that he went through*

\* Ver. 1. *The second sabbath after the first.*] Commentators are greatly at a loss to understand what Luke means by *the second sabbath after the first*, σαββατον διωρισμενον. Some think the proper translation of his words are, *the first second-day sabbath*, understanding thereby the ordinary sabbath which happened in the passover week, and assigning the following reason of its name. The law enjoined, that on the second day of the passover week, they should offer the sheaf of the first fruits, Lev. xxiii. 10, 11. But in case of a backward season, they placed an intercalary month between the last



through the corn fields: (Matt. *At that time Jesus went on the Sabbath day through the corn.* Mark, *And it came to pass that he went through the corn fields on the Sabbath day.*) and his disciples plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing them in their hands. 2. And certain of the Pharisees said unto them, *Why do ye that which is not lawful to do on the Sabbath days?* The Pharisees

last month Adar, and the first month Abib, answering to our March, and called it Veadar, or the second Adar. From the second day of the passover week, on which the first sheaf was offered with prayers for a blessing on the beginning harvest, they counted seven weeks to Pentecost, (Lev. xxiii. 15, 16.) called for that reason the feast of weeks (Deut. xvi. 10.) and the feast of harvest (Exod. xxiii. 16.) The day on which they offered the first barley-sheaf, and from which they counted the seven weeks of harvest, to the feast of Pentecost, being the second day of the passover week, it is supposed that the ordinary sabbaths happening in these weeks, carried in their name a memorial of the term from whence they were computed. Thus the first of them was called *σαββατον διυτιροπρωτον*, the first second day sabbath, or the first sabbath after the second day of unleavened bread; the second, *σαββατον διυτιροδιυτιρον*, the second second-day sabbath: the third, *σαββατον διυτιροτριτον*, the third second-day sabbath, and so of the rest till the seventh. Had the abettors of this interpretation, viz. Jos. Scaliger, Isaac Casaubon, Lightfoot, Lamv, Whitby, Doddridge, &c. produced any other instance of the words *σαββατον διυτιροπρωτον* having the meaning they affix to it, an end would have been put to all disputes about the matter.—But for want of this, Grotius, Wolzogenius, Brennius, Dodwel, &c. have adopted another explication equally unsupported; for they can produce no passage of ancient writing, in which *σαββατον πρωτοπρωτον*, *διυτιροπρωτον*, *τετροπρωτον*, &c. signify the first, second, third, &c. prime, chief, or high sabbaths, sabbaths observed with uncommon solemnity, and of which they suppose there were three in the year; one at the Passover, another at Pentecost, and a third at the feast of Tabernacles. According to Grotius, therefore, the first second-day sabbath (*σαββατον διυτιροπρωτον*) was that which happened at Pentecost. But his opinion is plainly confuted by the circumstances of the history. Pentecost, being the feast of harvest, was solemnized after the harvest was wholly over, for which reason there could be no fields unreaped then, where the disciples could pluck the ears in passing. Cleopenburgh, Sam. Petit, Le Moine, Reland, and others, are of opinion, that as the civil year of the Jews began with the month Tizri, its first sabbath might be called not only the first sabbath of the year, but the first chief sabbath, to distinguish it from the sabbath preceding the new moon of Nisan, which they think was called *sabbatum secundo primum*, the second chief sabbath, because the ecclesiastical year began with that month, Exod. xii. 2.—Epiphanius, Beza, Sir Isaac Newton on Prophecy, pag. 154. have advanced another interpretation of the passage. They say that this *σαββατον διυτιροπρωτον* was the second holy convocation in the passover week, that is to say, the last day of the feast, the first holy convocation being the day after the passover solemnity itself. Luther, Surenhusius, Wolf, &c. think it was the first holy convocation, called the great sabbath, (John xix. 31.) on account of the extraordinary solemnity with which it was observed. Mr Doddridge supports Scaliger's opinion, and confutes those of Epiphanius and Luther by the following argument. The law of the sanctification of the two holy convocations, with which the feast of unleavened bread began and ended, allowed such servile work to be done



risees on seeing the disciples do what they supposed a profanation of the Sabbath, thought themselves warranted to rebuke them publicly. And because the offence was great, they represented it to their Master, that he likewise might reprove them for it : or if he did not, that he might appear to all as one who encouraged his disciples to break the Sabbath, or at least who had neglected to impress them with a due reverence for that holy day. Mark ii. 24. *And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they (Matt. thy disciples) on the Sabbath day that which is not lawful?* This accusation, therefore, though it seemed to be levelled immediately against the disciples, was really intended against Jesus himself. But he easily repelled it, by putting the Pharisees in mind of David, who, though a prophet as well as a king, in a case of necessity ate the sacred shew bread contrary to the law, Lev. xxiv. 9. and of the priests in the temple, who killed the sacrifices on the Sabbath day ; and by desiring them to consider a passage in Hosea, where God declares that he has greater pleasure in mercy than in sacrifice ; and by explaining unto them the end of the Sabbath itself, which was instituted for the benefit, and not for the detriment of mankind. He began with David's action in the matter of the shew-bread, which the high-priest himself was accessory to, which the Scriptures record with no mark of disapprobation, and which it seems the doctors never had condemned, and for that reason was a proper vindication of the disciples in the like circumstances. Mark ii. 25. *And he said unto them, Have ye never read (Luke, so much as this) what David did, when he had need and was hungered, he, and they that were with him?* 26. *How he went into the house of God \* in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and*

on them as was necessary for preparing victuals, Exod. xii. 16. Wherefore, had the disciples been blamed for plucking the ears on any of these days, the nature of their sanctification affording an easy vindication of that action, Jesus would not have failed to urge it.—Upon the whole, though the opinion first mentioned seems most agreeable to truth, it may be observed that according to all the interpretations of the passage, this first second day sabbath, on which the disciples plucked the ears of corn, happened near some passover ; for the most unfavourable supposition, namely that which Grotius has offered, makes it the sabbath of Pentecost, which was but fifty days after the Passover.

\* Ver. 26. *In the days of Abiathar the high priest.*] In the history, the priest from whom David received the shew-bread is called Ahimelech ; and it is generally agreed that he was the high priest, because Doeg accused him of inquiring of the Lord for David, (1 Sam. xxii. 10.) a thing which none but the high priest having on the ephod, could do. If that be true, Ahimelech must have been the high priest, because he himself confessed that he had often inquired of the Lord formerly without blame, ver. 15. Accordingly Josephus calls him the high priest several times.

But to make this matter easy, Hammond supposes that *in the days of Abiathar*, the phrase in Mark, should be translated, *before the days of Abiathar*, as



and did eat the \* *shew-bread*, which is not lawful to eat, (Matth. which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests), but for the priests, (Luke, alone) and gave also to them which were with him? The house of God, into which David went for the shew-bread, was not the tabernacle, for none but priests could go in thither. But it was the

*in personis*, Matt. i. 11. seems to signify before the captivity. Light-foot thinks it should be translated, *in the days of Abiathar the son of the high priest*, as *the Heli* signifies *the son of Heli*, Luke iii. 23. Whitby is of opinion that *agrippas* in this passage, signifies a *chief priest*, an eminent man of the order, which sense it must be acknowledged the word has often in scripture. Beza suspects the genuineness of the reading. Yet the copy from which the Syriac was taken, reads Abiathar, as all the copies at present do. Grotius supposes, that Abiathar being a more celebrated person than his father, is mentioned rather than him. Perhaps Abiathar was present when David came, whose request he might advise his father to grant. If so, it was abundantly proper to mention him in this affair. He is called Abiathar the high priest, though when David applied to him he did not possess that dignity, it being common to denominate people in every part of their life, by such eminent offices as they have held in any part thereof. Perhaps it may illustrate the matter to observe, that Ahimelech, the father of Abiathar, was not slain with the priests of Nob. For though Saul threatened him and all his father's house with death, 1 Sam. xxiii. 16. it is not said he was killed. We are only told that Doeg fell upon the priests, and slew fourscore and five of them. Besides, had Ahimelech been slain, the high priesthood would have been taken from his family, which it was not; for Solomon's deposition of Abiathar, Ahimelech's son, is declared to have been an accomplishment of the word of the Lord concerning the house of Eli. Till this period, therefore, Eli's descendants enjoyed the high priesthood. See the note on the words Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, Luke iii. 1. § 14. But, which puts the matter beyond doubt, Ahimelech is said to have been high priest in David's reign, 1 Chron. xviii. 16. Ahimelech's father was called Abiathar, 1 Chr. xviii. 16. and was high priest, being alive when David received the shew-bread. So our Lord says expressly. Perhaps being old he was incapable of officiating, which was the reason that his eldest son Ahimelech supplied his place, and inquired of the Lord for David. It is true, in the history of this affair, Ahimelech is called the son of Ahitub, 1 Sam. xxii. 20. but every where else he is called the son of Abiathar. Either therefore Ahimelech's father had two names, which was no uncommon thing in those days; or there is an error of his name in the text of Samuel, which might arise from the history's mentioning his contemporary Ahitub the father of Zadok of the line of Eleazar, or from some other cause unknown to us. And what has increased the difficulty of this affair is, that Ahimelech the son of Abiathar had a son named Abiathar, who after the slaughter at Nob fled to David, became his companion, and after his father Ahimelech's death was made high priest, in which office he continued till he was deposed by Solomon for conspiring with Adonijah, as we are told 1 Kings ii. 50,—53.

\* Ver. 26. *Shew-bread*.] In the Hebrew this is called *the bread of faces*. Calmet after the Jewish writers observes, that as the tabernacle first, and the temple afterwards, was God's palace and place of residence, so the weekly services of bread, and wine, and salt, were intended to denote his habitation among them, as if he had been an earthly prince for whom such provision was made.



the house of the high priest; situated beside the court of the tabernacle, and called the house of God on that account. Thus the apartment in which the high priest Eli and his servant Samuel slept, is called *the house of the Lord*, 1 Sam. iii. 15.—Mat. xii. 5. *Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath and are blameless?* He did not mean that these words are to be found in the law, but that they might read in the law, how that the priests were obliged on the sabbath days, to perform such servile work in the temple, as considered separately from the end of it, was a profanation of the sabbath, and yet were guiltless, because it was necessary to the public worship, on account of which the sabbath was instituted. From Numb. xxviii. 9. it appears, that besides the continual burnt-offering, the priests were obliged on the sabbaths to sacrifice two lambs extraordinary, by which their servile work was that day double of what it was on the other days of the week. This, though really no profanation of the sabbath, might according to the common notion of the Jews be so termed; and therefore in speaking of it our Lord calls it so. 6. *But I say unto you, that in this place is one greater than the temple.* If you reply that the priests were not culpable in those actions, because they were undertaken for the temple-service, I acknowledge it; but at the same time I must observe, that if the temple with its service is of such importance as to merit a particular dispensation from the law of the sabbath, I and my disciples, whose business of promoting the salvation of men is a matter of more importance, may on that account with more reason take the same liberty in a case of the like necessity. According to this interpretation, the reading *μεζον*, *a greater work*, instead of *μεζον* *a greater person*, which is authorized by so many MSS. will have a peculiar elegance. There is here a much more noble work carrying on than the temple-service. Or the common reading may be retained thus: if the servile work done in the temple on the sabbath is not reckoned an offence, because it is undertaken on account of the temple-worship, the rubbing of the ears for which you blame my disciples cannot be any, seeing they do it in order to support their life, while they are employed in the service of one who is greater than the temple. For his human nature was a much more august temple, in respect of the essential inhabitation of the divinity than that at Jerusalem. Hence he himself called his body a temple at the first passover, John ii. 21. 7. *But if ye had known what this meant, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless.* I delight in mercy (so *δωω* signifies, Matt. xxvii. 43.) more than in sacrifice, for this is the Hebrew form of comparison. Besides, it is not to be supposed that God would say to the Jews, he had no pleasure in sacrifice, which was his



his own institution. Thus our Lord plainly proved it to be God's will, that works of mercy, should not be left undone, though attended with the violation of the most sacred ceremonial institutions. Mark ii. 27. *And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: the sabbath was contrived for the benefit and relief of man, being instituted in commemoration of the creation of the world finished in six days, and to perpetuate unto latest ages the knowledge of this grand truth, that the world was made by God, in opposition both to atheism and idolatry, the sins which mankind have ever been apt to run into. It was instituted also that men abstaining from all sorts of labour, but such as are necessary to the exercises of piety and charity, might have leisure for meditating on the works of creation, wherein the perfections of God are fairly delineated; and that by these meditations they might acquire, not only the knowledge of God, but a relish of spiritual and divine pleasures, flowing from the contemplation of God's attributes, from the exercise of the love of God, and from obedience to his commandments. It is thus that men are prepared for entering into the heavenly rest, of which the earthly sabbath is an emblem. To conclude, among the Israelites, the sabbath was appointed to keep up the remembrance of their deliverance from Egypt, and for the comfort of their slaves and beasts, humanity to both being especially incumbent upon a people, who had once groaned under the heaviest bondage. From all which it is evident, that to burden men, much more to hurt them, through the observation of the sabbath, which has no intrinsic excellency in itself, is to act quite contrary to the design of God in appointing it. Mark iii. 28. Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath; since the sabbath was instituted for the benefit of man, the observation of it in cases of necessity may be dispensed with by any man whatsoever, but especially by me who am lawgiver of the Jewish commonwealth, and can make what alterations in its institutions I think fit. This argument, drawn from the consideration of his own dignity, our Lord largely insisted on, when he was prosecuted for a pretended profanation of the sabbath, by the cure which he performed at Bethesda, John v. 17,—30. § 45 \*.*

\* For the order observed by Mark and Luke in this part of the history, see § 34.—Jesus was often blamed by the Pharisees as having broken the sabbath, particularly John v. 16. § 45. Luke vi. 2. § 46. Matth. xii. 10. § 47. John ix. 14. § 78. Luke xiii. 14. § 90. Luke xiv. 2. § 92.

§ XLVII. *A few days after the second passover, a man that had his hand withered, is cured in a synagogue near Jerusalem. After which Jesus goes away to Galilee. Matth. xii. 9,—21. Mark iii. 1,—12. Luke vi. 6,—11.*

AT this time Jesus continued a while about Jerusalem, teaching not only the inhabitants of that city and of the neighbour-



ing villages, but the people who had come from all quarters to the feast, and who, in all probability, tarried on this occasion longer than usual, in order to hear the sermons and see the miracles of a prophet, concerning whom they had heard such astonishing reports. We may therefore suppose, that during his abode in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, our Lord was constantly attended by great multitudes; and consequently, that every sermon he preached had many hearers, and every miracle he performed many witnesses. In examining the following passage of the history, these observations deserve attention. For we are told that on another sabbath, perhaps the sabbath immediately following the first second-day sabbath mentioned in the preceding section, Jesus entered into a synagogue near Jerusalem, and taught the people. Luke, who alone mentions our Lord's teaching on this occasion, has not told us what the subject of this sermon was. He only observes, that there was in the synagogue a person whose right hand was withered, and gives an account of the miracle which Jesus so kindly performed for the recovery thereof. Luke vi. 6. *And it came to pass also on another sabbath, that he entered into the (Matt. their) synagogue and taught, and there was a man (Mark, there) whose right hand was withered.* His hand was not only withered, but contracted, as appears from Mark iii. 5. Matthew seems to say this miracle happened immediately after the transaction recorded in the preceding section. Matth. xii. 9. *And when he was departed thence, he went into their synagogue, &c.* Nevertheless, the transition which he makes use of, does not necessarily imply this. See Prelim. Observ. iii. On this occasion, there were present scribes and Pharisees, persons of the greatest character and learning, who had either mixed with the crowd that followed Jesus, or were in the synagogue before he came. These men, ever unfriendly to the Saviour, carefully attended to every thing he said or did, with an intention to find some matter of blame in him, by which they might blast his reputation with the people. Wherefore when they saw Jesus, after he had ended his sermon, fix his eyes on the man whose right hand was withered, they made no doubt but he would essay to cure him, and resolved to charge him directly with the sin, for which they blamed the disciples the sabbath before, hoping at least to raise prejudices in the minds of the people against him. Luke vi. 7. *And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath day; that they might find an accusation against him.* So gross was their hypocrisy, that they resolved to raise an outcry against him, if on the sabbath he should give a lame man the use of his hand, while they themselves were profaning it by an action which would have polluted any day; were seeking an opportunity to murder one who never had done them any harm, but a great deal of good. The evangelist ob-

serves



serves that the malicious designs of the Pharisees were not hid from Jesus. We may therefore in this instance, see the greatness of the courage of our blessed Lord, who resolutely performed the benevolent action he had undertaken, notwithstanding he knew it would expose him to the fiercest resentment of these wicked men.

8. *But he knew their thoughts, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst.* He ordered him to shew himself to the whole congregation, that the sight of his distress might move them to pity him; and that they might be the more sensibly struck with the miracle, when they observed the wasted hand restored to its former dimensions and activity in an instant. *And he arose and stood forth.* Matt. xii. 10. *And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days? that they might accuse him.* When the Pharisees saw Jesus going to perform the cure, they put this question to him, by which they declared in the strongest terms their opinion of its unlawfulness. But in so doing, they had no intention to prevent the action, which they knew he was resolved upon, but to render him odious to the common people, expecting that he would openly declare such things lawful, in opposition to the definitions of the doctors, who had all determined that to perform cures on the sabbath, was a violation of the holy rest. Or if he should give no answer to their question, as it implied an affirmation of the unlawfulness of what he was about to attempt, they thought it would render him inexcusable, and give the better colour to their accusation. Luke vi. 9. *Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing, Is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good or to do evil? to save life or to destroy it? (Mark, to save life or to kill?)* That he might expose the malice and superstition of the Pharisees, he appealed to the dictates of their own mind, whether it was not more lawful to do good on the sabbaths than to do evil, to save life than to kill. He meant, more lawful for him on the sabbath to save mens lives, than for them to plot his death without the least provocation. This was a severe but just rebuke, which in the present circumstances must have been sensibly felt. Yet the Pharisees pretending not to understand his meaning, made him no answer, Mark iii. 4. *But they held their peace.* Wherefore he answered them with an argument which the dullness of stupidity could not possibly overlook, nor the peevishness of cavilling gainsay. Matth. xii. 11. *And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? 12. How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days.* If the regard you have for the life of your cattle leads you to do servile work on the sabbath for the preservation of a single sheep, charity should much rather induce you to labour



labour for the preservation of a brother, though the good office is to be done on the sabbath. Having thus spoken, he looked upon them all in such a manner as to shew both his indignation at their wickedness, and his grief for their impenitence. Mark iii. 5. *And when he had looked round about on them (Luke, upon them all) with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts.* - He knew that his arguments did not prevail with them, because they were resisting the conviction of their own minds, and was both angry at their obstinacy, and grieved on account of the consequences of it; shewing these just affections of his righteous spirit by his looks, that if possible an impression might be made either on them or on the spectators. He might in this likewise, propose to teach us the just regulation of the passions and affections of our nature, which are not sinful in themselves, otherwise he who was without sin could not have been subject to them. The evil of them lies in their being excited by wrong objects, or by right objects in an improper degree. But to return, at the same time that Jesus testified his displeasure with the Pharisees, he comforted the infirm man, for he commanded him to stretch out his contracted hand, and with the command communicated power to obey. In an instant his hand was made sound as the other, so that he stretched it out immediately in the sight of all present, who thus were eye-witnesses of the miracle. Mark iii. 5. *He saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand; and he stretched it out, and his hand was restored whole as the other.* The evangelists say no more. They leave their readers to imagine the wonder and astonishment of the numerous spectators, and the joy of the man who had recovered the use of so necessary a member. They only observe that the Pharisees being as little able to find fault with the miracle, as they had been to answer the argument by which Jesus justified his performing it on the sabbath, acted like downright madmen. They were sensible of the greatness of this miracle, and perhaps were convinced of the truth of his mission who had performed it. But their rage, on account of his having violated their precepts concerning the sabbath, and their other evil passions, pushed them to such a pitch of extravagance, that they went away and joined counsel with their inveterate enemies the Herodians or Sadducees, in order to have him taken out of the way; for they found it was not in their power otherwise to keep the people from being impressed with his doctrine and miracles. Luke vi. 11. *And they were filled with madness, and communed one with another what they might do to Jesus.* Mark iii. 6. *And the Pharisees went forth and straightway took counsel with the Herodians against him, (Matth. held a council against him) how they might destroy him.* The circumstance taken notice of by Matthew, makes it probable that the scribes and Pharisees who were present at this miracle, were members



members of the Sanhedrim or great council. 7. *But Jesus withdrew himself with his disciples to the sea.* (Matt. xii. 15. *But when Jesus knew it, he withdrew himself from thence.*) The wrath of the rulers being raised to such a pitch, endangered our Lord's life. Wherefore, knowing their designs, he retired into Galilee, where he preached and wrought miracles as privately as he could, that he might avoid giving offence. His fame however was now so great, that vast multitudes gathered round him even in Galilee, among whom were many, who having seen or heard of the miracles on the infirm man at Bethesda, and on the withered hand in the synagogue, followed him from Jerusalem and Judea, after his retreat from the Pharisees. *And a great multitude from Galilee followed him, and from Judea. 8. And from Jerusalem, \* and from Idumea, and from beyond Jordan, and they about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they had heard what great things he did, came unto him.* This immense multitude did not all come together purely out of curiosity. It was the principle no doubt which moved many, but others came to be healed of their diseases and infirmities. And as our Lord's fame had spread, not only through the whole land of Israel, but into the neighbouring heathen countries *Idumea, Tyre, Sidon, Syria,* and the rest, we may be sure that the diseased who came at this time to be cured by him, were not a few, and that they with their attendants made a considerable part of the crowd, which was now

\* Ver. 8. *And from Idumea.*] Properly *Idumea* is a Greek name, derived from the Hebrew *Edom*, by which Esau was also called, whose posterity originally inhabited mount Seir, Deut. ii. 5. or that hilly tract of country which lay between Horeb the mount of God, and Canaan, Deut. i. 2. However, those mountains did not extend to the Arabian Gulf. For when the Israelites were denied a passage through them, they went round Mount Seir, or the habitation of Edom, towards the Arabian Gulf, Deut. ii. 1. And after they had spent many days in this journey, went at length towards the north, and passed the border of the Edomites, that is, the land of the Edomites itself. The ancient *Idumea* consisted of two parts, *Gobolitis* and *Amalecitis*; and the whole was called by various names, *Gobalene, Arabia, &c.* It was situated to the south of Palestine, lying between it and Egypt. So that the southern border of the land, which fell to the lot of the tribe of Judah, bordered upon Edom, Josh. xvi. 1, 21. Compare also Josh. xi. 17. xii. 7. Numb. xxxiv. 3. During the Babylonish captivity, the Edomites spread themselves into the southern parts of Judea, at that time left desolate, or but thinly inhabited. Afterwards they were conquered by the Maccabees, but rather than quit their possessions they submitted to circumcision, and professed the Jewish religion. Thus the Edomites dwelling in the southern parts of Judea were incorporated with the Jews; but the country which they had seized was still named after them, especially when the Herod family came to the throne, the first Herod being one of this nation. *Idumea* therefore comprehended, not the ancient possession of the Edomites only, but the south parts of Judea. After our Lord's time, the whole of Judea was sometimes called by the Greeks and Romans *Idumea*, who named even the Jews themselves *Idumæans* from the country which they possessed.



now so great, that to avoid being trod down by those who came to touch him in order to be healed, Jesus was obliged to go aboard one of his disciples boats, out of which, as on other occasions of a like nature, he no doubt taught them the doctrines of salvation. For it was his constant custom to join preaching with the working of miracles, the latter giving efficacy to the former. Mark iii. 9. *And he spake to his disciples that a small ship should wait on him, because of the multitude, lest they should throng him.* 10. *For he had healed many, insomuch that they pressed upon him to touch him, as many as had plagues.* 11. *And unclean spirits when they saw him fell down before him and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God.* 12. *And he straitly charged them that they should not make him known.* See on Matt. viii. 4. § 27.

As the Jews never doubted but Messiah would by dint of sword bear down all that opposed him, it must have been very mortifying to the disciples, now that they saw their master flee before such an handful of enemies, and conceal himself in a remote corner of the country. But the evangelist Matthew, to the account which he gives of this transaction, subjoins the reason of it. He observes, that in this Jesus acted agreeably to the ancient prophecies concerning Messiah; and particularly to Isaiah xlii. 1. where it is foretold that Messiah would be no warrior; that he would not make men his subjects by force of arms, but by the power of persuasion; that he would shew gentleness even towards his enemies; and that these mild measures should be attended with perfect success at length. By his preaching, and by the preaching of his apostles, the doctrines of true religion would at last prevail, and the Gentiles, by receiving them, would become his subjects. Mat. xii. 15. *But when Jesus knew it, he withdrew himself from thence, and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all.* 16. *And charged them that they should not make him known.* 17. *That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, (xlii. 1.) saying,* 18. *Behold my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall \* shew judgment to the*

\* Ver. 18. *Shew judgment to the Gentiles.* The word judgment (*κρισις*) in the evangelist, answers to *מִשְׁפָּט* in the prophet, which the LXX. Prov. viii. 20. have translated by (*αληθεια*) *truth*, a name often given to the gospel by the apostles, both in their sermons and writings. Or because in the Old Testament we find the laws of God called his judgments, *κρισις* here may signify in particular, the great laws of religion, the eternal rules of righteousness, which our Lord preached in person to the nations inhabiting Palestine, and which his apostles afterwards published in his name to the Gentiles. Or the word *κρισις*, in this and the following verse, may signify *holiness*, fitly called judgment, because it is the most genuine effect of reasoning or judgment. This sense the word *κρισις* or judgment has evidently, Psal. xxxvii. 6. "He will bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and



*the Gentiles.* 19. *He shall not strive nor cry, neither shall any man bear his voice in the streets;* though Messiah might easily bear down his enemies by force of arms, he shall not strive with martial violence, nor cry the alarm of war in the field of battle, neither shall his voice be heard in the streets, as of an enraged general sackng a conquered town. Agreeably to this prophecy, though Jesus, by the assistance of the wondering crowds that attended him wherever he went, in constant readiness to support him, could have crushed all his adversaries at once, he never made use, either of them, or of his miraculous power for such purposes, but discharged the duties of his mission with all meekness, gathering in his subjects, and overcoming his enemies, not with the force of arms but of truth. And when his enemies attacked him, instead of making resistance, he silently withdrew, being utterly averse to popular commotions. At the same time, in his retreats he always gave the necessary encouragement to those who had any real goodness of heart, however small it might be, agreeably to what was prophesied of Messiah in the proverbial expressions, 20. *A bruised reed shall be not break, and smoking flax shall be not quench.* Or the bruised reed and smoking flax may signify the weakness of Christ's enemies, whom he could have destroyed as easily as men break a bruised reed, or extinguish a fire that is beginning to kindle, consequently the clause is of the same import with the former. "He shall not strive," &c.—*till he send forth judgment into victory.* The prophet's words are, "till he bring forth judgment to truth:" but his meaning is the same with the evangelist's; to bring forth judgment to truth, being, according to the Hebrew idiom, to make judgment truly to prevail; or, as the evangelist has expressed it, to make it victorious. By no military force, but merely by his own preaching, and by the preaching of his apostles, accompanied with the demonstration of the Spirit, he shall give religion such a powerful efficacy, that in process of time it shall prevail every where, to the utter destruction of idolatry, error, and wickedness: for this latter branch of prophecy relates evidently to after ages. 21. *And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.* The original prophecy runs thus: "And the isles shall wait for his law." But the meaning of

and thy judgment (holiness) as the noon day." But whatever sense we put upon the word *judgment*, there is in the prophecy an evident contrast between the publication of religion made by Moses the Jewish law-giver, and that which Messiah was to make. Moses published the doctrine of salvation only to the single nation of the Jews, whereas Messiah was to publish it to the Gentiles, or rather to all nations, whether Jews or Gentiles. Accordingly, Jesus by retiring at this time from his enemies, and preaching in Galilee, fulfilled the first branch of Isaiah's prophecy, *He shall send judgment to the Gentiles;* for his audience consisted of Gentiles as well as of Jews, the former flocking to him from the neighbouring country of Syria.



of both passages is the same. For the evangelist uses *the name of God* here with that latitude of signification which it has in the Hebrew language, where it denotes the Deity himself, his perfections, his worship, his laws, and, in one word, every thing relating to religion. Thus, Acts ix. 15. the Lord says of Saul newly converted, "He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles." Farther, in the language of the Old Testament, *the isles* commonly denote the idolatrous nations to the west of Judea, inhabiting the islands of Greece and Italy. The prophet's meaning therefore is, that the heathen nations, charmed with the humanity and gentleness of Messiah's disposition, the equity of his government, and the beauty and rectitude of his laws, *shall trust in him*, or obtain for themselves protection and safety by becoming his subjects.

§ XLVIII. *The Pharisees in Capernaum ascribe Christ's miracles a second time to Beelzebub.* (See § 35, 36. 86.) *He confutes that calumny. They ask the sign from heaven the first time.* (See § 68. 86.) *The sign of the prophet Jonas promised the first time.* (§ 68.) *Our Lord's mother and brethren visit him.* (See § 53. 57.) Matt. xii. 22,—50. Mark iii. 22,—35.

HAVING dismissed the immense crowd that had gathered round him on his arrival in Galilee from the passover, he left the lake, and went home to Capernaum, accompanied by certain scribes who had come down with him from Jerusalem to watch him. Or, if these men did not accompany him from the metropolis, they followed him quickly to Capernaum. For Mark assures us they were there when Jesus performed the miracle upon the blind and dumb demoniac, which is now to be related. This afflicted person was brought by his friends to Jesus, immediately on his return home. Perhaps they had been waiting for his arrival some time. Jesus did not disappoint their expectations. With great benignity he cured the man in an instant. So extraordinary a miracle (see on Matt. xv. 30. § 67.) in which the noblest sense, and likewise the most useful faculty of the human body were restored together, astonished the multitude beyond measure, and therefore highly extolling the author of the miracle, they called him *the Son of David*, that is, the Messiah. Matt. xii. 22. *Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind and dumb; and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw.* 23. *And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the Son of David?*—But the Pharisees who had come down from Jerusalem, impudently and maliciously affirmed, in the several companies of the spectators who were talking of the miracle, that he had performed it purely by the assistance of the devil. 24. *But when the Pharisees (Mark, the Scribes which came down from Jerusalem) heard it, they said, This fellow doth*  
not



~~cast out devils, but~~ \* *by Beelzebub the prince of the devils.* See the foundation on which they pretended to build this calumny explained in the note on Luke xi. 15. § 86. It oftentimes happens, that through ignorance or weakness, men form wrong judgments of things; a misfortune which because it necessarily springs from the imperfection of human nature, does not deserve the very harshest censure. But when wrong judgments proceed from evil dispositions, then indeed do they become highly culpable. Wherefore, to shew that the judgment which the Pharisees passed at this time upon our Lord's miracles was of the latter kind, the evangelist Matthew puts his readers in mind, that Jesus was perfectly acquainted with the most secret thoughts of these men, and accommodated his answer and rebuke to the temper of their mind. Matt. xii. 25. *And Jesus knew their thoughts:* He knew that the wickedness of their hearts, and not the weakness of their understandings, had led them to form the opinion they had uttered, if it was their real opinion; or rather to affirm it contrary to their conviction, which was the reason that at the conclusion of his defence, he reprimanded them in the sharpest manner. Accordingly, addressing himself both to them and the people, he demonstrated the absurdity of their calumny, by an argument drawn from the common affairs of life: *And said unto them, (Mark, And he called them unto him, and said unto them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan?) Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, (Mark, that kingdom cannot stand;) and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand. 26. And if Satan cast out Satan, (Mark, if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided) he is divided against himself, how shall then his kingdom stand? (Mark, he cannot stand, but hath an end.)* If evil spirits assist me in working miracles for the confirmation of my doctrine, they do what they can to promote the spiritual worship and ardent love of the true God, and as effectually as possible excite men to the practice of universal justice, benevolence, temperance, and self-government; all these virtues being powerfully recommended by my doctrine. But

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thus

\* Ver. 24. *By Beelzebub* ] Beelzebub was the great idol of the Eckronites, 2 Kings i. 2. From his name, which properly signifies the *lord or master of flies*, it would appear that the Eckronites considered him as having the command of the various insects wherewith in those warm climates they were infested, and which oft-times gathered into such swarms as proved both a noisome and deadly plague. The Greeks likewise had a god whose title was *μωσκαροφ*, *Muscarum venator*, *The destroyer of flies*. But he was in no great reputation among them, their country not being subject to this sort of calamity. The Eckronites being near neighbours to the Jews, the great veneration which they had for this idol, made him the object both of the horror and detestation of the devout worshippers of the true God. Accordingly, to express in what detestation they held him, they appropriated his name to the most hateful being in the universe, calling ~~the~~ the devil, or the prince of the evil angels, *Beelzebub*.



thus to make the evil spirits fight against themselves, is evidently to make them ruin their own interest ; unless it can be thought, that the strength and welfare of a society is advanced by jarring discord, and destructive civil wars. Your judgment therefore of my conduct, is palpably malicious and absurd.—27. *And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, \* by whom do your children cast them out ? Therefore they shall be your judges.* This is the second argument made use of by Jesus for confuting the calumny of the Pharisees ; as if he had said : For the same reason that you attribute my miracles to the devil, you may attribute all the miracles that ever were wrought in the world, to the devil, and particularly the miracles of your own prophets, which nevertheless you acknowledge to be divine. Dr Chandler's ingenious paraphrase of this verse deserves a place here : “ Ye do not impute the miracles of your prophets to Beelzebub, but on the evidence of these miracles, ye received them as the messengers of God. Nevertheless, ye reject me who work greater and more numerous miracles than they, and impute them to the power of evil spirits. Is this conduct of a piece ? Wherefore these prophets shall be your judges, they shall condemn you.” *On Miracles*, p. 120. See on Luke xi. 19, 20. § 86. for a different exposition of this passage.

28. *But if I cast out devils by the spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you :* since therefore it is plain, that I cast out devils by the divine assistance, the time is certainly come which God has set, for taking the power out of the hands of the devil, in order that he may himself rule both in the bodies and souls of men. The Messiah's kingdom is come, and you ought with joy to enter into it. 29. *Or else how can one † enter into a strong*

\* Ver. 27. *By whom do your children cast them out ?*] That many of the Jews did at this time attempt to cast out devils, is plain from Mark ix. 38. Acts xix. 13. Jos. Antiq. viii. 2. Calvin thinks that God conferred a power of this kind on some particular persons among the Jews anciently, that by thus proving his presence among them, he might retain the nation in the faith of his covenant ; and that the people having experienced God's power in those instances, came foolishly to institute for themselves the office of an exorcist. Agreeably to this it may be observed, that our Lord's argument does not require that the demons were actually expelled by these exorcists. It is sufficient that the Jews thought they were expelled, and did not find fault with those pretended miracles, as they did with Christ's real ones.

† Ver. 29. *Enter into a strong man's house.*] *The house of the strong man* into which Christ entered, was the world, fitly called *Beelzebub's house* or *palace*, because there he is served by luxury, lust, covetousness, pride, anger, and the other evil passions of men. The goods or vessels belonging to this strong man which Christ spoiled, are the wicked, called *Beelzebub's vessels* metaphorically, as Paul is called by Christ “ his chosen vessel,” Acts ix. 15. Or, if we chuse to pursue the allegory more closely, by the vessels or furniture of Beelzebub's house, we may understand the lusts and passions of mens hearts, the instruments by which he keeps possession of them.



*strong man's house and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house: if you deny my inference, you should consider, that though some perhaps have cast out devils by the assistance of Beelzebub, they never hurt his kingdom by it; they never carried matters so far as to extirpate sin out of the minds of men. Whereas, I not only expel the devils, but I spoil them of their power; consequently I act by a power superior and opposite to theirs, even by the assistance of the Spirit of God. Wherefore, the kingdom of God is certainly come unto you. 30. He that is not with me, is against me; and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad: if, according to the maxims of the world, those are reckoned enemies who do not assist us against our foes, I who am so deeply engaged in the opposition to Satan, ought much rather to be reckoned his enemy. That Jesus is here reasoning from the maxims of the world only, and not upon any principle of his own, is plain; because on other occasions he declared the very reverse of this maxim to be the rule of his judgment, particularly Mark ix. 40. "He that is not against us, is for us." Matth. xii. 31. Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: (Mark, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme,) but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, shall not be forgiven unto men. (Mark, But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation.) 32. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come. This inference is not particularly connected with the member of the discourse immediately preceding it; but it arises from the whole series of the reasoning; as if Jesus had said, Since all these arguments make it evident, that I perform my miracles by the Spirit of God, you should not ascribe them to the devil. Yet this blasphemy may be forgiven you, because you may repent and believe, upon receiving stronger proofs of my mission from God. When that period cometh, namely, after I am raised from the dead by the Holy Ghost, and the miraculous gifts are shed down upon almost all believers, and the nature of Messiah's kingdom is more fully made known, the foundation of your prejudices \* against me shall be removed. Where-*

fore,

\* The prejudices which alleviated the sin of the Jews, who rejected Jesus during his own life time, and which in the period here referred to were to be removed, arose from such causes as these:—1. His parentage and place of abode; for his countrymen being well acquainted with both; would not allow him to be Messiah, because they imagined when Messiah came, no man would know from whence he was, John vii. 27. 2. The old prophet Elias had not appeared to usher in the Messiah, as they expected, according



fore, if you shall then speak against the Holy Ghost, by maliciously affirming, that his gifts and miracles come from the devil, it shall not be forgiven you, because it is a sin which you cannot possibly repent of, in as much as farther evidence shall not be offered you; but you shall be punished for it, both in this world, and in the world to come. Or we may translate the clause differently, *It shall not be forgiven him, neither in this age, neither in the age to come*, importing that no expiation was provided for the blasphemy of the Spirit, either under the Jewish or Christian dispensations. Mark iii. 30. *Because they said he hath an unclean spirit*: That is, to use Mark's own words, (ver. 32.) Because they said, "He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils." Our Lord declared the irremissibleness of the sin against the Holy Ghost on this occasion; that the Pharisees might be awakened to a sense of their danger, in approaching so near as they did to that sin, when being unable to deny his miracles, they represented them as performed by the assistance of the devil. Matt. xii. 33. *Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit*: If you make my miracles Beelzebub's, you must make my doctrine his also. All the good I do, you must say is his work; all the exhortations by which I excite sinners to repentance, are his; the knowledge which I give you of the way of life, and the motives I offer for your encouragement to enter upon it, are his. On the other hand, if you make my doctrine God's, you must make my miracles his likewise; for men judge of the nature of an agent by the actions which he does, just as they judge of trees by the fruit they produce. For which reason you may easily know, that I am not in league with Beelzebub, but that you yourselves are so. Or we may give the words another turn thus: since you Pharisees pretend to extraordinary holiness, your words and actions should all be holy. Judge therefore candidly, and speak reverently of the divine dispensations. Or, if you will blaspheme, lay aside your pretensions to religion. For however specious these may be, your true characters will be discovered by your words and actions, even as

according to the doctrine of the Scribes, Matt. xvii. 10. founded on the prophecy, Mal. iv. 5. 3. Christ's mean condition of life occasioned violent prejudices against him in the minds of the Jews, who firmly believed that their Messiah would be surrounded with all the pomp and splendour of an earthly prince, and who in speaking of him, had been accustomed to give him the high sounding titles of the *King of Israel*, and *Son of God*. But by our Lord's resurrection from the dead, and by the descent of the Spirit on the apostles, the foundation of all these prejudices was sapped. Then he was demonstrated to be the Son of God with power, Rom. i. 4. Then he was known to have come down from heaven, John vi. 60. 62. Then he was exalted to be a prince and a saviour, to give repentance and remission of sin, Acts v. 31. A kingly dignity infinitely superior to all the most dazzling honours of an earthly diadem.



as a tree is known by its fruit. But to what purpose multiply words? I am sensible that you can speak nothing but evil of the servants and ways of God, for I know you to be men of perverse and malicious minds, and the thoughts of your heart will always shew themselves by the words of your mouth. 34. *O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.* 35. *A good man out of the good treasure of the heart, bringeth forth good things; and an evil man out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things.* Next he declared, that the atrociousness of the blasphemy of the Spirit, is not lessened by its being a sin committed in words. The reason is, words expressing the dispositions of mens hearts, partake of the nature of those dispositions, on which account we shall be rewarded or punished for our words, as well as for our actions. 36 *But I say unto you, That \* every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment:* since therefore men shall give an account of, and be punished at the day of judgment, for every sinful word they speak, you can by no means hope to escape, if you commit so great a sin as the blasphemy of the Spirit, though it be a sin in words only. 37. *For by thy words also* (see on Luke xiv. 12, 13- § 92.) *thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned:* seeing that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, (ver. 34.) and words partake of the nature of the dispositions from which they proceed; seeing also, that much good or evil may be produced by words, you may easily understand, that as by other things, so by the right or wrong use of speech *also*, men shall be justified or condemned. The farther explanation of this verse may be drawn from James i. 26. iii. 3,—10.

These reasonings were clear and unanswerable. Yet the scribes  
in

\* Ver. 36. *Every idle word.*] An idle word (*ρημα αργον*) according to the idiom of the Hebrew language, may signify a lie; *lor* (Exod. v. 9.) where Pharaoh orders heavier tasks to be imposed upon the Israelites, that they might not have regard (*בדברא שקר ad verba mendacii*) to lying words, the LXX. as Keuchenius observes, have *vain words* (*ενανους λογους*) a phrase not very distant from the one under consideration. But in the Targum, it is (*כפתנמיז בטליז in verbis otiosis*) idle words, answering to our Lord's expression; *בטל* being rendered in the LXX. by *αργον otiosus sum*. See Trommius' Concord. It is plain therefore that an idle word (*ρημα αργον*) may be the same with a lie, *verbum mendacii*. Le Clerc imagines, that according to the Hebrew idiom, an idle word may signify in the general, any vain, sinful, profane speech. But that which comes nearest to explain our Lord's expression, is a passage in Origin. contr. Celsum, lib. ii. p. 73. where reasoning against Celsus, he says, *και ο καλουμενος γι παρα τοις διαλεκτικοις αργος λογος, σοφισμα τυγχανων, εν ιστι μιν σοφισμα*. Wherefore *αργος λογος*, in the style of the logicians, is a *sophism* or false reasoning, used with a view to deceive, especially in a matter of importance, such as the Pharisees used on this occasion most maliciously to deceive the people, and to hinder them from being affected properly by Christ's miracles.



in mockery replied, Master, we would see a sign from thee ; insinuating that the ejection of devils were but trifling miracles, which, for all he had said to the contrary, might be done by the help of devils, and that never so many signs of that kind should not convince them. They would not believe, unless he would prove his mission by what on another occasion they called the sign from heaven. (See on Matt. iv. 6. § 17.) 38. *Then certain of the Scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee.* Jesus told them, their requiring a sign after so many miracles were wrought to convince them, shewed them to be *a wicked and adulterous generation*, (see on Mark viii. 38. § 71.) a spurious breed which had degenerated from the faith and piety of their great progenitor Abraham ; for which reason they should have no other signs but such as they were every day beholding, the sign of the prophet Jonah excepted. He meant the miracle of his own resurrection from the dead, typified by the deliverance of Jonah from the whale's belly, and which he often appealed to, as the great evidence of his mission from God. 39. *But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas :* The greatness of your wickedness makes you unwilling to receive the truth, for which reason you only make a pretence of desiring more evidence. Sufficient proofs of my character and mission have already been laid before you ; and no greater shall be given except the miracle prefigured by what befell the prophet Jonah. 40. *For as Jonas was three days and three nights \* in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be † three days and three nights in the*

\* Ver. 40. *The whale's belly.*] The fish which swallowed Jonah, is in our translation called *a whale* ; but in both the original languages, it signifies any great fish in general, and should be translated so in this passage, at least if it be true which some affirm concerning the whale, that its throat is so narrow as not to admit the body of a man.

† Ibid. *Three days and three nights.*] From the history of our Lord's crucifixion and resurrection, it appears that he continued in the grave only one day complete, together with a part of the day on which he was buried, and of that on which he arose again. It seems the Jews had no word answering exactly to the Greek *νύχθήμερον*, or natural day of twenty-four hours, but they expressed that idea by the phrases *night and day*, and *day and night*. Thus, Dan. viii. 14. *Unto two thousand and three hundred evening mornings, i. e. days, as it is in our translation, shall the sanctuary be cleansed.* Thus also, what is called *forty days and forty nights*, Gen. vii. 12. is expressed simply *forty days*, ver. 17. Wherefore, as it is common in general computations, to ascribe a whole day to what takes up only a part of it, when this was done in the Jewish language, it was necessary to mention both *day and night*. Hence, a part of three days was called by them, *three days and three nights*. Thus Esther says to the Jews, ch. iv. 16. *Fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day ; I also and my maidens will fast likewise, and so will I go in unto the king.* Yet the history, ch. v. 1. expressly says he went to the king on the third day. A second example we

have



\* *the heart of the earth.* The miraculous preservation of Jonah for three days in the belly of a fish, was to the Ninevites a certain proof of his mission from God, being credibly attested to them, either by the mariners who threw him overboard at a great distance from land, or by some other persons, who happening to see the fish vomit him alive upon the shore, might enquire his story of him, and who in the course of their business met him afterwards at Nineveh, where they confirmed his preaching by relating what they had seen †. In like manner, Christ's resurrection

have, 1 Sam. xxx. 12. where the Egyptian whom David's men found in the field, is said to have *enten no bread, nor drank any water, three days and three nights*. Nevertheless, in giving an account of himself, the Egyptian told them, that his master had left him, "because three days ago he fell sick;" in the Hebrew it is, *I fell sick this third day*, i. e. this is the third day since I fell sick. In like manner, Luke ii. 21. it is said, *when eight days were accomplished, they circumcised the child*; whereas the law ordered them to circumcise on the eighth day, reckoning the day of the birth the first; so that though eight days are said to have been accomplished at the circumcision of Jesus, he might really be no more than six days old, if he was born at the end of the first day, and circumcised about the beginning of the eighth. Nay, among the Jews, things were said to be done *after three days*, when they were done on the third day. Thus Rehoboam says to the people, 2 Chron. x. 5. *Come unto me after three days*, which they understood to be an order to come on the third day. For we are told, verse 12. that *Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day, as the king bade, saying, Come again to me on the third day*. In like manner, Deut. xiv. 16. *מִתַּרְשִׁישׁ תָּבוֹא אַחֲרֵי שְׁלֹשָׁה יָמִים* is explained ch. xxvi. 2. by *וּבְיָמֵינוּ תָבוֹא אַחֲרֵי שְׁלֹשָׁה יָמִים*. See also Luke ii. 46. where *מִיָּמֵינוּ תָבוֹא אַחֲרֵי שְׁלֹשָׁה יָמִים* signifies *on the third day*, and John xx. 16. where *מִתַּרְשִׁישׁ תָּבוֹא אַחֲרֵי שְׁלֹשָׁה יָמִים* signifies undoubtedly *on the eighth day after the preceding sabbath*. Agreeably to these forms, the prophecy of our Lord's resurrection from the dead is sometimes expressed by his rising *after three days*, sometimes by his rising *on the third day*. Wherefore from these examples it is evident, that his predictions concerning the time of his lying in the grave were exactly fulfilled, notwithstanding he remained there only one day complete, with a small part of the days on which he was buried and arose.

\* Ver. 40. *The heart of the earth.*] This expression in our Lord's prediction, does not imply that he was to be buried in the middle of the earth, but in the earth simply. Thus, (Ezek. xxviii. 2.) Tyre is said to be "in the heart of the sea," though it was so near the continent, that when Alexander besieged it, he carried a causeway from the land to the city.

† If the suppositions mentioned above are thought improbable, we may account for the credit which the Ninevites gave to Jonah's story in the following manner. He told them how unwilling he was to bring God's message to them; that to shun it, he had taken ship to fly to Tarshish. That a great storm coming upon them, he was thrown overboard by the mariners, in consequence of the lot's falling on him. That he was swallowed by a fish, in whose belly he was miraculously preserved three days, and then vomited up alive, in order to be sent anew with the irksome message. All this might appear credible to the Ninevites, from the gravity and sobriety of Jonah's conversation, from the length of the journey he had come to deliver this message, without the least advantage to himself, and from the earnestness and grief with which he delivered the dreadful denunciation. Whatever way it was, certain we are from our Lord's testimony,



tion from the dead, after having been three days and three nights in the heart of the earth, being credibly attested to the Jews, should clearly demonstrate that he came from God. Farther, Jesus told his hearers, that the Ninevites being judged at the same time with the men of that generation, and their behaviour being compared with theirs, should make their guilt appear in its true colour, and condemn them. For though they were idolaters, they repented at the preaching of Jonah, a stranger, a poor person, and one that continued among them only three days, and did no miracle to make them believe him. But the men of that generation, though worshippers of the true God by profession, could every day hear unmoved the much more powerful preaching of a prophet infinitely greater than Jonah, even the preaching of the eternal Son of God, who confirmed his doctrine by the most astonishing miracles. Likewise he told them, that the queen of the south being judged with them, would condemn them, she having undertaken a long journey to hear the wisdom of Solomon, whereas they would not hear one much wiser than Solomon, though he was come to their very doors. Or if they condescended to hear his wisdom, they would not embrace it. Mat. xii. 41. *The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation,* (*ἀναστειλάτωσαν ἡ τῆς γενεᾶς ταύτης μετὰ τῶν ἑννιβεταίων, shall rise in the judgment* or at the day of judgment, along with this generation) *and shall condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonas, and behold, a greater than Jonas is here.* 42. \* *The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment* (*ἀναστειλάτωσα ἡ τῆς γενεᾶς ταύτης, shall be raised up in the judgment*) *with this generation, and shall condemn it; for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, a greater than Solomon is here.* To conclude, in allusion to the occasion of the dispute, our Lord finished his defence with the parable of the possessed person, who after having had the devil expelled out of him, received him back again, and thereby was brought into a worse condition than ever. 43. *When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through † dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none:* When convictions,

testimony, that the Ninevites believing his story, were so moved with his message, as sincerely to repent of the enormous sins, by which they had awakened the divine vengeance.

\* Ver. 42. *The queen of the south.*] The country over which this queen reigned, is in the Old Testament called Sheba, and is supposed to have been that which in profane authors goes by the name of Sabea. Yet Josephus does not allow her to have been queen of that country, because Arabia Felix, of which Sabea was a part, lay more to the east than to the south of Judea. He says she took her title from Saba, a city of Meroe, an island in the Nile, over which she reigned, and the queens of which were afterwards called Candace.

† Ver. 43. *Dry places.*] *Ἄρυδρον*, deserts; see Psal. cvi. 14. LXX. This some understand of the devil's going among the Gentiles, who did not give them



victions are raised in the mind of a sinner, whether by God's word, or by the chastisements of his providence, the devil is vowed out of him, and the man forms many strong resolutions against his sins. The evil spirit thus expelled walks to and fro in desert places, seeking to seduce God's subjects from their allegiance. But meeting with little opportunity of gratifying his malicious dispositions in these solitudes, he leaves them, in hopes of getting access into his former habitation. 44. *Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished;* that is, notwithstanding the man had so peremptorily resolved against his sins, the devil findeth him void of all his former convictions, good thoughts and resolutions, but at the same time completely furnished with his lusts and passions, and every thing that can make him a commodious habitation for an evil spirit. Matt. xii. 45. *Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits, i. e. a great many, the number seven denoting perfection, whether of good or bad things—more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first:* they get easy access, and take a sevenfold stronger possession of him than they had before. *Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation, who resist the convictions which my doctrine and miracles have raised in them.* This parable, therefore, is designed to teach men in every age, the danger of resisting their convictions, and of breaking through their resolutions, the effect being

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them such a welcome reception and quiet possession as the Jews did. Dr Doddridge thinks, that after the devil was driven out, he would be under a kind of restraint for a while, and that the circumstance of his going into desert places is beautifully imagined, to represent those malignant beings as impatient of the sight of mankind, when restrained from hurting them, and as chusing on such occasions to seek their rest in the prospect of a sandy desert. But it is needless thus to stretch the minute circumstances of a parable. If the moral intended is clearly expressed by the chief strokes of it, a variety of lesser circumstances may without any particular signification be added, to unite and enliven the principal members of the composition, as in history-painting many things are put into the piece, which though not absolutely necessary to the general design, give beauty and perfection to the whole. In the interpretation of a parable, therefore, we are not under the least necessity of assigning a moral meaning to every particular circumstance. At the same time, if all of them naturally suggest such a meaning, the parable is so much the more perfect. In this of the ejected demon, the circumstance of his going away to deserts after he was dispossessed, seems to be one of the kind mentioned, and like the other parts of the allegory, was adapted to the notions of the people for whom it was designed. It seems the Jews believed, that evil spirits frequented deserts, when they were not directly employed in hurting mankind. See the translation which the LXX. have given of Isa. xiii. 21. Nor is their opinion inconsistent either with Scripture (see Rev. xviii. 2.) or reason. For since evil spirits are permitted to wander up and down the world tempting men, they may be supposed, among other places, to be sometimes in deserts.



commonly to render them much more obdurate and abandoned than before. See 2 Pet. ii. 20.

In the heat of this debate, our Lord's mother, who had come from Nazareth to visit him, perhaps with an intention to carry him home, having got notice where he was, and what he was doing, went to call him away. She was attended by her sister's children, who were the cousins, or according to the Hebrew dialect, *the brethren* of Christ. See the account given of James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddeus, and Simon Zelotes, § 37. If these were the persons called here our Lord's *brethren*, they were his disciples and apostles. Probably Mary on her arrival at Capernaum had sent for them; and being informed by them where her Son was, she and they came to him together. If by our Lord's brethren some other of his cousins or more distant relations are meant, they came with his mother from Nazareth. Being come to the house, they spake to the people about the door. Matt. xii. 46. *While he yet talked to the people, behold his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him, (Mark, sent unto him, calling him).* 47. *Then one said unto him, Behold thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee.* It was on this occasion that Jesus uttered that excellent saying, which will never be forgotten while there are memories in the world to retain it, or tongues to repeat it. 48. *But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?* Mark iii. 34. *And he looked round about on them which sat about him.* Matt. xii. 49. *And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren.* 50. *For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, (Mark, the will of God) the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.* This short speech, related by the evangelists with great simplicity, is, without their seeming to have designed it, one of the finest encomiums imaginable. Could the most elaborate panegyric have done Jesus Christ and his religion half the honour which this divine sentiment hath done them. *Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother!* I regard obedience to God so highly, that I prefer the relation it constitutes, and the union which it begets, to the strongest ties of blood. They who do the will of my Father, have a much greater share of my esteem than my kinsmen as such. I love them with an affection tender and steady, like that which subsists between the nearest relations; nay, I reckon them, and them only my brethren, my sisters, and my mother. An high commendation this, and not a reflection upon our Lord's mother, who without doubt was among the chief of those who did the will of God. What veneration should live in the hearts of men for Jesus and his religion, which exhibits an idea of such perfection in goodness!



§ XLIX. *Jesus preaches the parabolical sermon, beside the sea of Galilee. The parable of the sower. The reason why he taught the people by parables. The interpretation of the parable of the sower. The parable of the lighted lamp. Matt. xiii. 1,—23. Mark iv. 1,—25. Luke viii. 4,—18.*

It seems the calumnies of the Pharisees had not the effect intended; for the crowd was now become so great, that neither the house nor the court before it could contain the people that came. Jesus therefore carried them out to the sea-side, and taught them. Matt. xiii. 1. *The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea-side.* And because there were many still coming and going, he judged it necessary to enter into a boat, for the conveniency of being heard and seen by all, which he might easily be, if the shore thereabouts was somewhat circular and declining, after the manner of an amphitheatre. 2. *And great multitudes were gathered together unto him,* (Luke viii. 4. *Much people were gathered together, and were come to him out of every city*) *so that he went into a ship and sat,* (Mark, *sat in the sea*) *and the whole multitude stood on the shore,* (Mark, *was by the sea on the land*). Thus commodiously seated in the vessel, he delivered many doctrines of the highest importance, wisely making choice of such for the subject of his sermons, when he had the greatest number of hearers, because on those occasions there was a probability of doing the most good by them. Mark iv. 2. *And he taught them many things by parables.*

He began with the parable of the sower, who cast his seed on different soils, which according to their natures brought forth either plentifully, or sparingly, or none at all. By this similitude he represented the different kind of hearers, with the different effects which the doctrines of religion have upon them, according to their different dispositions. In some these doctrines are suppressed altogether; in others they produce the fruits of righteousness, more or less, according to the goodness of their hearts. A parable of this kind was highly seasonable, now that the multitude shewed such an itching desire of hearing Christ's sermon, while perhaps they neglected the end for which they ought to have heard them. Mark iv. 2. *And said unto them in his doctrine,* i. e. in the course of his teaching, 3. *Hearken, behold there went out a sower to sow.* 4. *And it came to pass as he sowed, some fell by the way-side,* which being hard beaten, the seed could not enter, (Luke, *and it was trodden down,* i. e. bruised by the feet of travellers) *and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up.* 5. *And some fell on stony ground,* (Matt. *stony places*) ground that lay upon a rock, (Luke, *and some fell upon a rock*) where it had not much earth, either above it to retard its springing, or under it to nourish its roots, and immediately it



*it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth. (Luke, And as soon as it was sprung up) 6. But when the sun was up, or shone hot upon it, it, viz. the tender blade, was scorched, and because it had no root, (Luke, because it lacked moisture) it withered away. 7. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, (Luke, with it) so as to cover it from the sun and dews, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit. 8. And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased, and brought forth some thirty, (Matt. thirty fold) and some sixty, \* and some an hundred seeds for one that was sown. 9. And he said unto them, (Luke, And when he had said these things, he cried) He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. See on Matt. xi. 25. § 42.*

It seems the apostles, and others who were in the boat with Jesus, did not understand the meaning of his parable. Wherefore, when they heard him cry at the conclusion of it, "He that hath ears to hear let him hear," they were so displeased, that they went up and asked him why he spake in such obscure terms? and desired him to explain what he had delivered. Mark says they came to him when he was alone, iv. 10. *And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve, asked of him the parable.* Most harmony-writers, thinking this inconsistent with the acknowledged circumstances of the history, have supposed that the interpretation of the parable was not given now, but on some other occasion, though for the sake of perspicuity it is related along with the parable. Yet the nature of the thing, as well as the testimony of Matthew, ver. 10. proves sufficiently that the question which occasioned this interpretation was put immediately after the parable was delivered. For the question took its rise from the concluding words of the parable, *He that hath ears to hear let him hear*; which were no sooner pronounced than the disciples came from their several stations in the vessel, and asked the reason why he spake in parables, since he desired his hearers to understand what he said. To remove this difficulty therefore we may suppose, that in addressing Jesus, the disciples spake with such a tone of voice as they used in conversation, and that Jesus answered them on the same key; so that the people upon the shore not hearing distinctly what passed, Jesus and his disciples were to all intents and purposes

\* Ver. 8. *And some an hundred.*] The fruitfulness of the seed that was sown on good ground, is not to be understood of the field's producing a hundred times as much as was sown on it; but it is to be understood of a single seed's producing a hundred grains, which it might easily do where it met with a good soil, and was properly nourished. But there are many accidents by which the produce of a field, so rich as to be capable of nourishing a hundred grains by a single root, is reduced within ordinary bounds. The parable mentions some of them. Part of the seed is trodden down by passengers, part is picked up by birds, part is starved in bad soil among rocks, and part is choked by weeds; so that the hundred fold increase of a single seed, mentioned in the parable, is perfectly just.



pages alone. Or after finishing the parable, he might as on former occasions of this kind, (Luke v. 1. 3.) order his disciples to thrust out a little farther from the land, that the people might have time to consider what they had heard. And the disciples embracing this opportunity, might speak to him in private concerning the manner of his preaching. Either of these suppositions, if I am not mistaken, fully comes up to the import of Mark's phrase, "And when he was alone, they that were about him," &c. See Luke ix. 18. for a similar expression. The answer which Jesus returned to the disciples, who blamed him for teaching the people by parables, is very remarkable. *Matth. xiii. 10. And the disciples came and said unto him, Why speakest thou to them in parables? 11. He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them (Mark, that are without, τῶν ἔξω, the people out of the vessel, the multitude on the shore. See ἔξω used in a similar sense in the history of Peter's denial of his master, Matth. xxvi. 69. § 136.) it is not given. (Mark, All these things are done in parables.)* I may explain to you the nature of the Messiah's kingdom, and the other difficult doctrines of the gospel, because you are able to hear them, but I may not deal so with the multitude, who are obstinate to such a degree, that they will not hear any thing contrary to their prejudices and passions. For I must act agreeably to the rule by which the divine favours are dispensed. *Matth. xiii. 12. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: \* but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away, even that he hath* Our Lord did not mean that he was by any direct and immediate agency of his, going to deprive the people of the knowledge they had already obtained, because they had misimproved it. But that as persons who despise the advantages bestowed on them, are often deprived of those advantages, so the Jews having misimproved and misunderstood the revelation of God's will already made to them, were on that account deprived of such a full and plain declaration of the doctrines of the gospel, as they might otherwise have enjoyed. They were altogether unworthy of such a favour. Besides, they had rendered themselves incapable of it. This sense of the passage is confirmed by the subsequent clause. *13. Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing, see not; and hearing, they hear not, neither do they understand.* I speak to them in parables, because their stupidity is so gross, and their prejudices so numerous, that though they have capacities proper for

\* *Ver. 12. But whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away, even that he hath.* We have an expression in Juvenal parallel to the latter clause of this verse, Sat. iii. ver. 208, 209.

Nil habuit Codrus——et tamen illud  
Perdidit infelix nil ——



for understanding and receiving my doctrine, they will neither understand nor receive it, if I speak in plain terms. Here therefore our Lord declares, that the blindness of the Jews was the reason of his teaching them by parables, and not his teaching them by parables the reason of their blindness.

Having thus shewed his disciples what it was that made him give the people instruction in an indirect way by figures, he added, This needs not be a matter of surprise to you, for Isaiah has long ago predicted it, ch. vi. 9. 14. *And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive.*

Ακουσεν ακουσας, "Ye shall hear with hearing" is a well known Hebraism, signifying the certainty of the matter to which it is applied. For this kind of repetition, according to the genius of the Jewish language, is the strongest manner of affirmation\*. The prophet's meaning therefore is, that the Jews should certainly hear the doctrines of the gospel without understanding them, and see the miracles which confirmed these doctrines without perceiving the finger of God in them; not because the evidences of the gospel, whether external or internal, were insufficient to establish it, but because the corruption of their hearts hindered them from discerning those evidences. 15. *For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.* In the prophecy, this passage is somewhat differently worded. "Go and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not, and see ye indeed, but perceive not; make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and convert, and be healed." In the original language, a *fat heart* is a metaphorical expression, denoting a proud, sensual, stubborn disposition. Thus, Deut. xxxii. 15. "Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked." Psal. cxix. 70. "Their heart is as fat as grease." In like manner, *heavy ears* and *blind eyes* signify the strongest aversion to hear or see what is contrary to one's inclination. But the difficulty lies principally in the form of the expression: "Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears," &c. This form is peculiar to the prophetic

\* Thus, Gen. ii. 17. *In the day thou eatest thereof, dying thou shalt die*, i. e. shalt surely die. See the marginal translation. Acts iv. 17 *απειλασμεθα*, we will severely threaten them. Acts v. 28. *επειγγαγια πα-εγγυλαμεν*, did we not straitly charge you? Luke xxii. 15. *With desire have I desired*, i. e. I have greatly desired to eat this passover with you, before I suffer.



tical writings, implying no more but an order to the prophet, simply to foretel that the Jews should make their own hearts hard, and their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and be converted and healed. They would shut their eyes against the miracles, and their ears against the doctrines of the gospel, as if they were afraid of being converted and healed. I prove this to be the true solution, by Jer. i. 9. "Then the Lord put forth his hand and touched my mouth, and the Lord said unto me, Behold I have put my word in thy mouth; see I have this day set thee over the nations, and over the kingdoms, to root out and pull down, and to destroy and throw down, and to build, and to plant." That is, I have appointed thee to prophecy concerning nations and kingdoms, that they shall be rooted out, pulled down, destroyed, &c. Thus also, Ezek. xlii. 3. "According to the vision that I saw, when I came to destroy the city," i. e. came to prophecy that the city should be destroyed, as it is in the margin of the English Bible. And to mention no more examples, the chief butler giving Pharaoh an account of Joseph's interpretation of his dream, and of that of the chief baker, says, (Gen. xli. 13.) "Me he restored unto mine office, and him he hanged." This prophecy therefore, and its citation, are exactly the same; only the prophecy represents the thing as to happen, *make the heart of this people fat*, whereas the citation represents it as already come to pass, *this people's heart is waxed gross*, &c. This people have made themselves so wicked and proud, that they will neither hear nor see any thing opposite to their lusts, in so much, that they look as if they were resolved not to be converted\*. But it must not be concealed, that Mark and

\* This interpretation of the prophecy, and of its application made by Matthew, is confirmed by the prophet himself. "Then said I, Lord, how long?" How long am I to make the heart of this people fat? To what length of time shall I foretel that their blindness will continue? "And he answered, Till the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate. They are to continue from this time forth blind and hardened, till God's judgments destroy them as a nation. This happened about forty years after Christ's death, when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem, burnt the temple, and put an end to the constitution. And though in the prophecy it be foretold that the blindness of the Jews was to continue *till* that period, the expression does not imply that it was then to end. See on Matt. i. 25. § 7 p. 33. Their blindness still continues as before, and it proceeds too from the same cause; namely, their obstinate attachment to the institutions of Moses, which has ever filled their minds with unconquerable prejudices against the gospel. The interpretation of the prophecy offered above, is confirmed also by the subjects of the parables, to which our Lord applied this prophecy. For had he told the Jews plainly, what he told them in an obscure manner by the parable of the sower, namely, that a principal part of the Messiah's office was to infill the doctrines of true religion into the minds of men, and that the chief effect of his power on earth should be, to set them free from the



and Luke have given our Lord's answer, a seemingly different turn from what it has in Matthew. Luke's words are, viii. 10. *And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God; but to others in parables, that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand* The difficulty however arises principally from Mark's representation, iv. 11. *But unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables* 12. *That seeing they may see, and not perceive, and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them*: words which at first sight seem to import, that Jesus spake to the people obscurely in parables, on purpose that they might not understand what he said, for fear they should have been converted and pardoned. Nevertheless, it is evident from Mark himself, that our Lord cannot be branded with a sentiment of this kind; for at the conclusion of the whole he says expressly, verse 33. "With many such parables spake he the word unto them as they were able to hear it." But if Jesus spake to the people in parables as they were able to hear, his answer to the disciples recorded by Mark who makes this observation on his preaching, cannot reasonably be understood in any sense inconsistent therewith. For which reason, the gloss put upon this observation by Dr Clarke, must fall. "Jesus (says he) chose to deliver his doctrine in such a manner, that it might be received by those who were sincerely desirous to know and obey the will of God, while the wilful and incorrigible remained deaf to all his instructions." *Serm. on 2 Theff. ii. 11.* Indeed that on some occasions men are hardened, as a just punishment of their abusing the means of grace bestowed

the tyranny of their lusts, that they might become fruitful in goodness; had he plainly declared what he insinuated in the parable of the grain of mustard, which grew so great as to shelter the fowls of heaven under its branches, that the Gentiles were to be governed by the Messiah, not as slaves but free born subjects, and to enjoy all the privileges of his kingdom, on an equal footing with the Jews; had he taught them plainly, what he insinuated obscurely by the parable of the sown seed which sprang up silently, and by the parable of the leaven hid in a quantity of meal, I mean, that the kingdom of the Messiah was neither to be erected nor supported by the violence of war, but by the secret force of truth, whose operation, though strong, is altogether imperceptible; I say, had our Lord taught his hearers these things in plain terms, they would have rejected them, and been greatly offended, and probably have forsaken him altogether; so opposite were the doctrines mentioned, to their favourite notions and expectations. In the mean time, if it shall be asked, why he troubled his hearers with those subjects at all, since he delivered them in such obscure terms; the answer is, it was expedient for the confirmation of the gospel, that he himself in his own life time should give some hints of the nature thereof, and of the reception it was to meet with; because the Jews comparing the events with these parabolical predictions, would be disposed thereby to acquiesce more peaceably in the admission of the Gentiles into the church, without subjecting them to the Mosaic institutions, a thing they were not brought to do but with the utmost difficulty,



bestowed on them, I do not at all deny. But though this doctrine be true, it does not seem to be contained in the passage under consideration. The true interpretation depends on a just view of Mark's scope, which, if I mistake not, our translators have missed. For remembering that in the parallel passage, Matt. xiii. 14. the words of Isa. vi. 9, 10. are quoted, and finding some of the phrases of that prophecy in Mark, they never doubted but Isaiah was cited there likewise, and interpreted the passage accordingly. For they gave the Greek *μᾶλλον* in Mark, the signification of the Hebrew *לֵב* in the prophecy, supposing it to be the corresponding word, and by that means made Mark contradict what he himself has told us in verse 33. "With many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it." Nevertheless, if it shall be found, that properly speaking there is no citation here, but only an allusion to a citation which our Lord made in the beginning of his discourse, and which a precedent historian had recorded, we may allow that though *לֵב* in the prophecy signifies *left*, *μᾶλλον* in our Lord's answer recorded by Mark, may have a different, but equally natural signification, viz. *If so be, if peradventure*, agreeably to its use in other passages. That Isaiah is not cited in the branch of Christ's answer recorded by Mark, is evident, because there is not the least hint of any citation. Besides, the slightest comparison of the passages themselves will shew them to be different. In the prophecy, God orders Isaiah to declare concerning the Jews in after times, that they should hear the Messiah preach, but not understand him; and see his miracles, but not conceive a just idea of the power by which they were performed; and a prophecy of them that they should harden their hearts, and deafen their ears, and close their eyes, lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and convert and be healed. In Matthew, our Lord assigns the completion of that prophecy, as the reason why he spake to the people by parables. They were become so stupid and wicked, that they could not endure to hear the doctrines of the gospel plainly preached to them. In Mark he added, that because this was the state of their mind, he wrapped up his doctrine in parables, with an intention that they might see as much of it as they were able to receive, but not perceive the offensive particulars which would have made them reject both him and his doctrine; and that they might hear as much as they were able to hear, but not understand any thing to irritate them against him; and all with a design to promote their conversion and salvation. Mark iv. 11. *Unto them that are without, all these things are done (delivered) in parables: 12. That seeing they may see, and not perceive, and hearing they may hear, and not understand, (μᾶλλον) \* if peradventure they may be converted,*

\* Ver. 12. *If peradventure they may be converted.*] This signification Vol. II. K *μᾶλλον*



verted, and their sins be forgiven them. From our Lord's using two or three of the prophet's phrases, we cannot conclude that he cited him, or even that he used those phrases in the prophet's sense of them. He had cited him in the beginning of his discourse, and therefore though he affixed a different sense to his words, he might use them by way of allusion, to insinuate that it was the wickedness of the Jews, predicted by Isaiah, which had rendered this kind of teaching the only probable method of converting them. Upon the whole, the expressions ascribed to Jesus in Mark's gospel, are by no means the same with those found in Matthew; but they contain an additional sentiment on the same subject, by way of farther illustration. It is true, Christ's teaching the people by parables placed in this light, appears to have been a favour rather than a judicial stroke, notwithstanding it appears from our Lord's own words, that it was of the latter kind. But the answer is, that this manner of teaching without doubt implied the highest blame in the Jews, whose wickedness had rendered it necessary, and conveyed an idea of punishment on the part of Christ, who for their wickedness deprived them of better means of instruction, so that it was really a punishment. At the same time it was a favour likewise, as it was a less punishment than they deserved, and a punishment to reclaim them. I acknowledge, that if our Lord had not spoken in answer to the disciples, who desired to know the reason of his conduct, what he said on this occasion might have been compared with other texts, in which, according to the genius of the Hebrew language, the words lead us to think of the intention of the agent, while in the mean time \* nothing but the effect of his action is described. Nevertheless, the circumstances of the passage under consideration forbid this method of interpretation. To conclude, it must be no small recommendation of the sense offered above, that it is much more to the honour of Christ than the common interpretation. For though it cannot be pretended, that he always bestowed on every person the most efficacious means of instruction possible for the divine wisdom to contrive, because if that had been the case, none could have resisted his teaching, yet we may venture to affirm, that when he taught men, he never did it but with a view to instruct them, and to promote their salvation; so far was he from

*μαρτυρῶν* has undoubtedly, Luke iii. 15. And as all the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, (*μαρτυρῶν αὐτὸν ἢ οὐκ*) whether (if) he were the Christ or not. 2 Tim ii. 23. In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, (*μαρτυρῶν*) if peradventure God will give them repentance.

\* Nothing but the effect. &c.] Of this sort in the following passage. Matt. x. 34. Think not that I am come to send peace on earth. I am not come to send peace but a sword, 35. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, &c. where without doubt the effect, not the design of Christ's coming, is expressed.



from forming his discourses darkly, on purpose to keep them in ignorance, and hinder their conversion. For it is beyond the power of the most captious disputant to deny, that the great end of all Christ's labours was the illumination, conversion, and salvation of mankind.

Thus Jesus assured his apostles, that the only reason why he taught the people by parables, was their wickedness, which had rendered them incapable of receiving his doctrine any other way. Whereas he could safely unfold it to his apostles in the plainest terms, the honesty and teachableness of their disposition fitting them for such a favour, in which respect he told them they were peculiarly happy. And to enhance this privilege the more, he told them that many patriarchs and prophets of old, had earnestly desired to see and hear the things which they saw and heard, but were denied that favour, God having till then shewed them ~~to~~ his most eminent saints in shadows only, and afar off in the womb of futurity. Matt. xiii. 16. *But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear.* 17. *For verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.* The attention of the disciples being thus raised, Jesus proceeded to explain the parable. Mark iv. 13. *And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? And how then will ye know all parables?* How will ye be able to understand all my other parables, many of which are more obscure than this? Matt. xiii. 18. *Hear ye therefore the interpretation of the parable of the sower.* Mark iv. 14. *The sower soweth the word.* (Luke 11. *The seed is the word of God*). The seed therefore signifies the doctrines of true religion, and the various kinds of ground, the various kinds of hearers. Hence Mark's words, ver. 20. *Οι εστιν επι την γην την καλην σπειριται,* do not signify as in our translation, "These are they which are sown on good ground," as if the seed denoted the hearers; but these are they which being sown (*λαμβάνουσι το σπργαν*) receive seed upon good ground; the Greek word *σπειριται*, like the English word *sown*, being applied either to the ground or to the seed. The ground by the highway side, which is apt to be beaten by mens treading upon it, is an image of those who have their hearts so hardened with impiety, that though they hear the gospel preached, it makes no impression on them at all, because they either hear it inattentively, or if they attend, they quickly forget it. This insensibility and inattention, is strongly represented by the beaten ground along the highway, into which the seed never entering, it is bruised by the feet of men, or picked up of birds. Matt. xiii. 19. *When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, or considereth it not, for ~~evmme~~ signifies both, the ~~evmme~~ the wicked one, (Mark, *Satan cometh immediately*)*  
and



*and catcheth away that* (Mark, *the word*) *which was sown in his heart: this is he which received seed by the way-side.* The devil is said to come and catch away the word from this sort of hearers, not because he has power to rob men of their knowledge or religious impressions by any immediate act, but because they expose themselves through carelessness to the whole force of the temptations which he lays in their way, and particularly to those which arise, whether from their commerce with men, a circumstance observed by Luke, who tells us that the seed was trodden down; or from their own headstrong lusts, which like so many hungry fowls, fly to, and quickly eat up the word out of their mind. The perturbation occasioned by the passions of this kind of hearers, and by the temptations which they are exposed to, renders them altogether inattentive in hearing; or if they attend, it hardens them against the impressions of the word, and effaces the remembrance of it in an instant, in so much that the pernicious influence of evil passions and bad company, cannot truly be represented by any lower figure, than that the word is taken away by the devil, whose agents such persons and lusts most certainly are. The rocky ground represents those hearers, who so far receive the word into their hearts, that it springs up in good resolutions, which perhaps are accompanied with a partial reformation of some sins, and the temporary practice of some virtues. Nevertheless, they are not thoroughly affected with the word, it does not sink deep enough to remain in their minds. And therefore, when persecution arises for the sake of the gospel, and such hearers are exposed to fines, imprisonments, corporal punishments, banishments, and death; or even to any great temptation of an ordinary kind, which requires firmness to repel it, those good resolutions, which the warmth of their passions had raised so quickly in hearing, do as quickly wither, because they are not rooted in just apprehensions of the reasons that should induce men to lead such lives; just as vegetables, which, because they have not depth of soil sufficient to nourish them, are soon burnt up by the scorching heat of the mid-day sun. Matt. 20. *But he that received the seed into stony places,* (Mark, *stony ground.* Luke, *They on the rock*) *the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it* 21. *Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while;* (Luke, *which for a while believe;*) *for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended!* (Luke, *in time of temptation fall away.*) The ground full of thorns, that sprang up with the seed and choked it, represents all those who receive the word into hearts full of worldly cares, which sooner or later destroy whatever convictions or good resolutions are raised by the word. Mark iv. 18. *And these are they which are sown among thorns, such as hear the word,* (Luke, *which when they have heard go forth*). 19. *And the cares of*  
*this*



*this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful, (Luke, And are choked with cares, and riches, and pleasures, and bring no fruit to perfection).* Worldly cares are compared to thorns, not only because of their pernicious efficacy in choking the word, but because it is with great pain and difficulty that they are eradicated. In the parable, the hearers of this denomination are distinguished from those who receive the seed on stony ground, not so much by the effect of the word upon their minds, as by the different natures of each; for in both the seed sprang up, but brought forth no fruit. The stony ground hearers are incapable of retaining the impressions made by the word, *they have no root in themselves*, no strength of mind, no firmness of resolution to resist temptations from without. Whereas the thorny ground hearers have the soil, but then it is filled with the cares of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the love of pleasures, which sooner or later stifle the impressions of the word, by which means in the issue they are as unfruitful as the former. And both are distinguished from the way side hearers by this, that they receive the word and yield to its influences in some degree. Whereas the others do not receive the word at all, hearing without attention; or if they do attend, forgetting it immediately. The way-side hearers hold the first place in the parable, because they are by far more numerous than the rest, and the good ground hearers the last, because they are but few in number. Luke viii. 15. *But that on the good ground are they which in an honest and good heart having heard the word (Mark, receive it) keep it*, in opposition to the way-side, which never received the seed at all, but bearing it on its surface, offered it to the fowls that first came, which devoured it. Matthew expresses this sentiment as follows, xiii. 23. *But he that received seed into the good ground, is he that heareth the word and understandeth it*, to intimate to us, that the right understanding of the word is a great help to our receiving and keeping it—*which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth some an hundred fold, some sixty, some thirty*; they bring forth the fruit of good actions, in proportion to the talents and opportunities God hath bestowed upon them. Luke takes notice of another excellent quality of this sort of hearers, viii. 15. *and bring forth fruit with patience*, in opposition both to the stony and thorny grounds, which nourished the seed that was cast into them only for a while; the former till the sun arose, the latter till the thorns sprang up. The goodness of heart for which this kind of hearers are applauded, consists in their capacity, which having been duly cultivated by them, they understand what they hear, as Matthew informs us. But the honesty of their heart consists in their disposition to believe the truth, though contrary to their prejudices, and to practise it, though



though opposite to their inclinations: This is what Mark calls *receiving the word*. All who hear the word with these qualifications, and join thereunto *patience*; that is, firmness of resolution, and the government of their passions; never fail to bring forth some an hundred fold, some sixty, some thirty; they bring forth fruits of righteousness, in proportion to the different degrees of strength, in which they possess the graces necessary to the profitable hearing of the word.

When Jesus had ended his interpretation of the parable of the sower, he did not direct his discourse to the people, but continued speaking to the apostles, shewing them by the similitude of the lighted lamp, the use they were to make of this, and of all the instructions he should give them. As lamps are kindled to give light unto those who are in an house, so the understandings of the apostles were illuminated, that they might fill the world with the delightful light of truth. Mark iv. 21. *And he said unto them, Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed, and not to be set on a candlestick?* Luke viii. 16. *That they which enter in may see the light.* He told them farther, that though some of the doctrines of the gospel were then concealed from the people, on account of their prejudices, he had revealed them to his apostles, that they might all in due time be preached openly and plainly through the world, for which reason it became his apostles, to whom God had given both a capacity and an opportunity of hearing these doctrines, to hear them with attention. Mark iv. 22. *For there is nothing hid which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad. (Matt. be known and come abroad.)* 23. *If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.* See on Mark iv. 9. p. 292. also on Matt. xiii. 43. § 54. But because it was a matter of great importance that the disciples, who were chosen to publish his doctrine through the world, should listen to his sermons with the closest attention, he repeated his admonition. 24. *And he said unto them, Take heed what you hear; (Luke, Take heed therefore how ye hear,) with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: as ye have the charge of preaching the gospel committed to you, in proportion to the fidelity wherewith you discharge that trust, so shall it fare with you, not only in point of future reward, but even in respect of present privileges. And unto you that hear (aright, see on Matth. ver. 13. pag. 293.) shall more be given: agreeably to that law of the divine administration which I mentioned in the beginning of my discourse, Matt. xiii. 12. p. 293.* 25. *For he that hath, to him shall be given, and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath. (Luke viii. 18. seemeth to have.)*



§ L. *The parable of the tares of the field.* Matt. xiii. 24,—30.

HAVING thus privily in the boat explained the parable of the sower, and shewed by the similitude of the lighted lamp what use his disciples were to make of his instructions, Jesus turned about to the multitude on the shore, and raising his voice a little, delivered the parable of the tares cast into a field, which an industrious husbandman had sowed with good grain. Those tares in the blade being very like to wheat, were not at first observed, but as they grew up, they shewed themselves to the no small surprise of the husbandman's servants, who knew that the field had been sowed with good seed. They proposed therefore to root them out immediately. But the husbandman forbade it, lest they should hurt the wheat, telling them that at the harvest he would order his reapers to gather them in bundles, and burn them. In this parable therefore we are taught, that through the craft of the devil, incorrigible sinners will intrude themselves into the visible church; that though good men may judge it for the interest of religion to extirpate such by violent methods, God does not allow it, both because wicked men cannot be certainly distinguished, and because they are oft times so connected with the righteous, that, if they are touched, the righteous will suffer withal, and that God has reserved the full exercise of justice upon wicked men to the last day, when he will unerringly distinguish between the good and the bad. According to this view of the parable, we may consider it as a vindication of the wisdom of God, both in permitting the wickedness of men professing Christianity, and in suffering it to go unpunished during this life. The wickedness of men cannot be prevented, without disturbing the fixed order of nature; that is, to prevent wickedness, men must be deprived of their freedom of agency, God must interpose miraculously, and the operation of second causes must be suspended. Nay, it is not fit to punish even incorrigible sinners in this life; because, being oft times closely connected by a variety of ties with the righteous, the latter would necessarily be involved in their ruin. Matt. xiii. 24. *Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: The erection of the kingdom of heaven by Messiah, or the establishment of a visible church on earth, and the corruption thereof through the creeping in of hypocrites, may be illustrated by a man's sowing good seed in his field. 25. But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way: So zealous and industrious was this enemy to do mischief, that while the servants of the husbandman, compelled by the calls of nature, were refreshing themselves with sleep, he took the opportunity to spoil the field which he had cultivated with so much care, by sowing tares in it.*



it. 26. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. 27 So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? 28. He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? These tares, though very like to wheat, were in their nature so entirely different from it, that by no culture whatever could they be changed into wheat. The servants therefore proposed to root them out, because it was to no purpose to let them remain, or because they fancied they would spoil the wheat. 29. But he said, Nay, lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. The husbandman considering better of the matter than his servants, forbade them to meddle with the tares because they might mistake them, and because, in rooting them up, they might pluck up much of the wheat along with them. 30. Let both grow together until the harvest; and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles, to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn.

§ LL. *The parable of the seed that sprang up imperceptibly.*  
Mark iv. 26,—29.

AFTER the parable of the tares, Jesus delivered that of the seed which sprang up imperceptibly, representing the influence of the preaching of the gospel upon mankind. Mark iv. 26. And he said, So is the kingdom of God; as if a man should cast seed into the ground, 27. And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how: The influence of the preaching of the gospel upon the minds of men, is oftentimes as imperceptible as the growth of corn, which cannot be discerned with the naked eye, though the person who has sowed it, looks at it ever so often and narrowly; it is likewise as inexplicable. However, as the earth of herself bringeth forth fruit gradually to perfection, so the preaching of the gospel, without any other care of its ministers, will of itself, with the blessing of heaven, produce both faith and holiness in the world. 28. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself, first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. 29 But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come: Though the ministers of religion, after having preached the gospel, can do nothing more for its propagation, just as the husbandman after having sown the seed can do nothing to make it grow, also, though they cannot discern the operation of the gospel upon the minds of men, any more than the husbandman can discern the growth of the corn, yet when their preaching has produced its effects, they can discern them, just as  
the



the husbandman knows when his corn is ripe for harvest. Moreover, those who by the preaching of the gospel are converted, they can gather into the church, as the husbandman puts in the sickle because the harvest is come.

In this parable we are informed, that as the husbandman does not by any efficacy of his own cause the seed sown to grow, but leaves it to be nourished by the soil and sun; so Jesus and his apostles having taught men the doctrines of true religion, were not by any miraculous force to constrain their wills, far less were they by the terrors of fire and sword to interpose visibly for the furthering thereof, but would suffer it to spread by the secret influences of the Spirit, till at length it should obtain its full effect. Moreover, as the husbandman cannot by the most diligent observation, perceive the corn in his field extending its dimensions as it grows, so the ministers of Christ cannot see the operation of the gospel upon the minds of men. The effects however of its operation when these are produced they can discern, just as the husbandman can discern when his corn is fully grown and fit for reaping. In the mean time, the design of the parable is not to lead the ministers of Christ to imagine that religion will flourish without due pains taken about it. It was formed to teach the Jews in particular, that neither the Messiah nor his servants would subdue men by the force of arms, as they supposed he would have done, and also to prevent the apostles from being dispirited when they did not see immediate success following their labours.

§ LII. *The parable of the grain of mustard-seed.* See § 90.  
Matt. xiii. 31, 32. Mark iv. 30,—32.

THE next parable he spake was that of the mustard, which from a small seed becomes in those eastern climes a spreading tree. Matt. xiii. 31. *Another parable put he forth unto them, saying,* (Mark iv. 30. *And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God, or with what comparison shall we compare it? The kingdom of heaven, i. e. the conversion of the world to the outward profession of Christianity, is like to a grain of mustard seed, may be compared to the growth of a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, 32. Which indeed is the least of all seeds, (Mark, that be in the earth,) but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and \* becometh a tree; (Mark, becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches,) so that the birds of the air come and † lodge in the*  
Vol. II. L branches

\* Ver. 32. *Becometh a tree.* γινώσκει δένδρον, *arborescat.* This phrase is applied by botanists to plants of the larger kind which grow to the magnitude of shrubs, and for that reason are called *plantæ arborescentes.*

† Ver. 31. *Lodge in the branches.* Κατασκηνύω, they find shelter, and pass their time there, both in the day time while the weather is bad, and during the night while they sleep.



*branches thereof, (Mark may lodge under the shadow of it.)* In this parable our Lord shewed his hearers, that notwithstanding the gospel appeared at first contemptible, by reason of the ignominy arising from the crucifixion of its author, the difficulty of its precepts, the weakness of the persons by whom it was preached, and the small number and mean condition of those who received it; yet, having in itself the strength of truth, it would grow exceedingly, and extend itself into all countries, and by that means afford spiritual sustenance to persons of all nations who should be admitted into it, not in the quality of slaves as the Jews imagined, but as free born subjects of the Messiah's kingdom, enjoying therein equal privileges with the Jews \*.

This parable was well calculated to encourage the disciples, who, judging the gospel by its beginning, might have been apt to fall into despair, when instead of seeing it preached by the learned, countenanced by the great, and instantly received with applause by all, they found it generally opposed by men in high life, preached only by illiterate persons, and received by few besides the vulgar. These to be sure were melancholy circumstances, and what must have given great offence; yet in process of time they became strong confirmations of the Christian religion. The treasure of the gospel was committed to earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power might appear to be from God.

\* This sense of the parable is the more probable, as our Lord seems now to have had his eye on Nebuchadnezzar's dream, (Dan. iv. 10.) in which the nature and advantages of civil government are represented by a great tree with spreading branches, fair leaves, and much fruit, *and in it was meat for all. The beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof, and all flesh was fed of it.*

§ LIII. *The parable of the leaven, see § 90. Our Lord's mother comes to him a second time, see § 48. Matth. xiii. 33,—35. Mark iv. 33, 34. Luke viii. 19,—21.*

JESUS next delivered the parable of the leaven. Matth. xiii. 33. *Another parable spake he unto them, The kingdom of heaven, the operations of the doctrines, precepts, and promises of the gospel upon the minds of men, may, in respect of their efficacy, be represented by the following similitude: it is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, perhaps this was the common quantity that used to be prepared in order to be baked, till the whole was leavened.* The meaning of this parable is commonly thought to be the same with that of the preceding. Yet there seems to be this difference between the two; the parable of the grain of mustard seed, represents the smallness of the gospel in its beginnings, together with its subsequent greatness; whereas the parable of the leaven, which being hid in a quantity of meal fermented the whole, expresses in



a very lively manner, both the nature and strength of the operation of truth upon the mind. For though the doctrines of the gospel when first proposed, seemed to be lost in that enormous mass of passions and worldly thoughts with which mens minds were filled, yet did they then most eminently exert their influence, converting mens thoughts, and desires, and cares, into a conformity to truth. The precise difference therefore between this and the preceding parable is, that the former represents the extensive propagation of the gospel from the smallest beginnings, but this the nature of the influence of its doctrines upon the minds of particular persons.

Mark iv. 33. *And with many such parables spake he the word unto them as they were able to bear it:* He preached the doctrines of the gospel in these and many other parables of a like nature, according as his hearers were able to receive them. 34. *But without a parable spake he not unto them.* He did not on this occasion speak any thing to them in plain language. His whole discourse was conceived in parables, so that it may justly be called his parabolical sermon. The reason why he addressed them in this figurative stile was, he judged it the most inoffensive way of proposing the great doctrines of the gospel, which in plain language they would not have received. And though they did not at the present understand them, the striking figures in the parables rivetted themselves in their memories, and were of great use to them afterwards, when they came to be explained by the events. In using this way of instruction, Jesus followed the example of ancient sages, and particularly Asaph, whose words the evangelist quotes on this occasion, accommodating them to Jesus. Matt. xiii. 34. *And without a parable spake he not unto them.* 35. *That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.*

While Jesus was delivering these parables, his mother and brethren came a second time, desiring to see him. Perhaps they were afraid that this continued fatigue of preaching might hurt his health, and would have had him rest a while to refresh himself. Luke viii. 19. *Then came to him his mother and his brethren, and could not come at him for the press.* 20. *And it was told him by certain, which said, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee.* But Jesus, knowing their errand, answered as before. 21. *And he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these which bear the word of God and do it.\** See on Matt. xii. 50. § 48.

\* Our Lord's mother made this visit, probably with a design to carry him to Nazareth, where she hoped he would work miracles, and bless his countrymen with the benefits he so freely dispensed wherever he came.

She



She seems to have succeeded in her design ; for not long after this he went away into his own country, as Matthew informs us, xiii. 53. which see. Accordingly we find, that on making the transposition in Mark mentioned § 31. he falls in with Matthew at chap. vi. 1. agreeing with him here, as every where else, in the order of the history, which is no small confirmation of this scheme of harmony.

§ LIV. *The parable of the tares explained.* See § 50.

Matt. xiii. 36,—43. Mark iv. 34.

THE multitude having now been long together, it is probable that the evening drew on. Jesus therefore dismissed them, and returned home with his disciples, who when they were come into the house, begged him to explain the parable of the tares. Matt. xiii. 36. *Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house. And his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares in the field :* explain the parable of the tares which were sown in the field. Jesus, pleased to find his disciples attentive to his parables, cheerfully granted their request. By *the husbandman*, he told them was meant Messiah ; by *the field*, the world, i. e. the church in the world, as may be collected from the parable itself ; by *the good seed*, good Christians, made so through the influences of the spirit of Christ ; by *the tares*, bad Christians, seduced to sin through the temptations of the devil. 37. *He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man.* 38. *The field is the world. The good seed are the children of the kingdom, but the tares are the children of the wicked one.* 39. *The enemy that soweth them is the devil ; the harvest is the end of the world ; and the reapers are the angels.* In this parable, therefore, he represented the mixture of the church on earth, and the dismal end of hypocrites, the most genuine offspring of the devil, who though they may deceive for a time, by assuming the fair appearance of goodness, yet, sooner or later, never fail to discover themselves. And though well meaning people, grieved to see the hurt that is done to religion by corrupt professors, wish to have the church wholly composed of sincere members, yet the bad must not be extirpated by persecution, because the servants of Christ cannot judge of men's hearts, so as to distinguish hypocrites with certainty, and consequently, in rooting them up, might be apt to destroy the wheat, or good Christians, with them. This parable likewise teaches us, that the distinction between good and bad Christians cannot be made till the end of the world, when there shall be an unerring, full, and final separation of the one from the other. Hypocrites, and false teachers, and all who either cause iniquity, or do it, shall then be gathered together and cast into hell, where they shall be tormented with the bitterest pain, while righteous men shall be made unspeakably happy in heaven. 40. *As therefore the tares are gathered and burnt in the fire ; so shall it be in the*  
*end*



*end of this world.* 41. *The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity.* 42. *And shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.* 43. *Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their father.* In this beautiful expression our Lord seems to have had his eye upon Dan. xii. 3. "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever." The righteous in travelling to heaven, are apt frequently to fall, by reason of the stumbling-blocks that lie in their way, of which stumbling-blocks, as our Lord here informs us, the persons with whom they converse oftentimes prove none of the least mischievous. By these falls they are sullied to such a degree, that their beauty is in a great measure obscured. Hence they are often held in no estimation, nay, it may be, are absolutely contemned. But when they enter the kingdom of their father, it shall fare quite otherwise with them. Being then freed from all the humbling circumstances which attend mortality, cleansed also from sin, and the pollutions of sin wherewith they are now disfigured, they shall shine like the sun in the firmament for brightness and beauty, and shall find no diminution of their splendour by age. A noble image this to represent the glory and happiness of righteous men with God their father. *Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.* This exclamation intimates, that truths of greater importance and solemnity cannot be uttered than those which respect the final misery of the wicked, and the inconceivable happiness of the righteous, and that all who have the faculty of reason, ought therefore to regard them with a becoming attention. See on Matt. xi. 15. § 42.

Mark insinuates, that on this occasion Jesus explained to the disciples in private all his other parables likewise. iv. 34. *And when they were alone, he expounded all things to the disciples.*

§ LV. *The parables of the treasure hid in a field, and of the merchant seeking precious pearls.* Matt. xiii. 44,—46.

It was on this occasion also, that Jesus delivered the parables of the treasure hid in a field, and of the pearl of great price, shewing the different ways by which men come to the knowledge and belief of the gospel. Matt. xiii. 44. *Again the kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hid in a field: one way in which the gospel is found and embraced, may be illustrated by a treasure hid in a field, the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field, in order that with the field he may have a right to the treasure in it.* This parable therefore was designed to teach us, that some meet with the gospel as it were by accident, and without



without seeking after it, agreeably to what the prophet Isaiah says, chap. lxxv. 1. "That God is found of them that seek him, not." On the other hand, the parable of the merchant who enquired after goodly pearls, and found one of great value, informs us, that mens receiving the gospel is oftentimes the effect of a diligent search after truth. Matt. xiii. 45. *Again the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man seeking goodly pearls: another way in which the gospel is found and embraced, may be illustrated by the behaviour of a merchant who goes in quest of beautiful pearls. 46. Who when he had found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had, and bought it: judging it to be worth a great deal more than the price set upon it, he bought it, though, in order to purchase it, he was obliged to part with all that he had. He did this, however, with cheerfulness, because he knew it would bring him a great deal more than it had cost him. The gospel is fitly compared to a treasure, as it enriches all who possess it; and to a pearl, because of its beauty and preciousness. Both parables represent the effect of divine truth upon those who find it, whether by accident, or upon enquiry. Being found and known, it appears exceeding valuable, and raises in mens breasts such a vehemency of desire, that they willingly part with all they have for the sake of obeying its precepts, and when they have parted with all on its account, they think themselves incomparably richer than before.*

§ LVI. *The parables of the net cast into the sea, which gathered fish of every kind; and of the householder which brings out of his treasure things new and old. Matt. xiii. 47,—52.*

THE parable of the net cast into the sea, which inclosed many fish of every kind, intimates, that by the preaching of the gospel a visible church should be gathered on earth, consisting both of good and bad men, mingled in such a manner, that it would be difficult to make a proper distinction between them, but that at the end of the world the bad shall be separated from the good, and cast into hell, which the parable represents under the image of casting them into a furnace of fire, because that was the most terrible punishment known in the eastern countries. See Dan. iii. 6. Matt. xiii. 47. *Again the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net that was cast, into the sea and gathered of every kind: the gathering of the visible church by the preaching of the gospel, and the final judgment of those who compose it, may be illustrated by the casting of a net into the sea which inclosed fishes of every kind. 48. Which when it was full they drew to shore, and sat down and gathered the good into vessels but cast the bad away. 49. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from among the just, 50. And shall cast them into the furnace of fire, there shall be wailing and gnashing*



*ing of tectb.* This parable will appear peculiarly proper, if we consider that it was spoken to fishermen who had been called from their employments, with a promise that they should catch men, Matt. iv. 19. It differs from the parable of the tares in its extent, representing the gathering of wicked men in general into the visible church along with the good, by means of the preaching of the gospel, together with the final judgment and state of the wicked; whereas the parable of the tares represents the introduction and punishment of hypocrites in particular.

When Jesus had finished these parables, he asked his disciples if they understood them, and upon their answering in the affirmative, he told them that every teacher of the Jewish religion, who was converted to Christianity and made a preacher of the gospel, might, by reason of the variety of his knowledge, and his ability to teach, be compared to a prudent master of a family, who nourishes it with the fruits both of the present and preceding years, as need requires. Matt. xiii. 51. *Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these things? they say unto him, Yea, Lord.* 52. *Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.* By this similitude our Lord shewed his disciples the use they were to make of the knowledge they had acquired, whether from the old revelation that had been made to them by the prophets, or from the new revelation of which Jesus was the author and dispenser. As the wise master of a family who possesses plenty of all sorts of provisions, brings them forth as the occasions of his family require, just so every able minister of the gospel, out of the stores of his knowledge, must bring forth instructions suitable to the necessities of his hearers.

§ LVII. *Jesus goes to Nazareth.* Matt. xiii. 53,—58.  
Mark vi. 1,—6.

Soon after this, Jesus went to Nazareth, accompanied by his mother and brethren, who had come to Capernaum to bring him home. Matt. xiii. 53. *And it came to pass that when Jesus had finished these parables, he departed thence.* Mark vi. 1. *And his disciples follow him.* His mother and brethren first accosted him while he was reasoning against the calumny of the Pharisees; Matt. xii. 46. But not being able to prevail with him to leave Capernaum at that time, they renewed their suit while he preached the parabolical sermon at the sea of Galilee, (Luke viii. 19. see the note at the end of § 53.) and obtained their request. For he went home to Peter's house in Capernaum, where he commonly abode. And after explaining the parable of the tares with the others, to his disciples in private, he set out on his journey to Nazareth. Matt. xiii. 54. *And when he was come into his own country:*



*country* : The evangelists call Nazareth our Lord's *own country*, because it was the town in which he had been brought up, and to distinguish it from Capernaum where he ordinarily resided. During his stay in Nazareth he preached in the synagogue, especially on the Sabbath day, and performed some miracles. But though his sermons contained great treasures of spiritual knowledge, and were delivered with the most captivating eloquence, the Nazarenes were not disposed by them to believe on him. They were wonderfully struck indeed with what they heard and saw, knowing that he was meanly descended, and had not the advantage of a liberal education. But these circumstances which heightened their wonder so much, prevented the effect which his doctrines and miracles ought to have had upon them. Fancying that when Messiah came, no man should know from whence he was, they could not acknowledge as Messiah one of their own townsmen, whose father, and mother, and brethren, and sisters they were so well acquainted with. Besides, the meanness of these his relations, and of their occupations, scandalized them. Wherefore, when they talked among themselves after hearing him preach, at the same time that they gave his knowledge, eloquence and miracles their due praise, they could not forbear expressing their contempt of him on account of the meanness of his family. Matt. xiii. 54. *And when he was come into his own country, (Mark, when the sabbath day was come) he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom and these mighty works? (Mark, many bearing him were astonished, saying, From whence hath this man these things, and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands? Is not this the carpenter the son of Mary?) 55. Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? 56. And his sisters, are they not all with us? whence then hath this man all these things? 57. And they were offended in him.* Being unable to overcome their old prejudices against him, on account of his family and relations, they were ashamed to acknowledge him for Messiah, and angry with him for assuming that title. See John i. 41. § 18. iv. 25. § 22. Nay so great was their wrath against him, that they expressed it in his hearing. *But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, (Mark, and among his own kin,) and in his own house.* This expression is proverbial, signifying, that those who possess extraordinary endowments, are no where in less request than among their relations and acquaintance. The reason is, superior merit never fails to be envied, and envy commonly turns the knowledge it has of persons some way or other to their disadvantage. Jesus therefore finding his townsmen the same stubborn, incorrigible, wicked



wicked people as ever, he did not perform many miracles among them. *58. And he did not many mighty works there, (Mark. He could there do no mighty works) because of their unbelief.* Mark vi. 5. *Save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them.* Probably their unbelief hindered them from bringing their sick to him, not to mention that it rendered his miracles altogether improper; because, had he performed ever so many, their prejudices would certainly have prevented any good effect they might otherwise have had. Mark vi. 6. *And he marvelled because of their unbelief:* he wondered at their perverseness in rejecting him upon such unreasonable grounds as the meanness of his parentage\*. Having made this second trial with a view to see whether the Nazarenes would endure his ministry, and to shew to the world, that his not residing with them was owing to their stubbornness and wickedness, he left them. *And he went round about the villages teaching:* he visited the towns in the neighbourhood, where he expected to find a more favourable reception. Thus the unbelief of the Nazarenes obstructed Christ's miracles, deprived them of his preaching, and banished him away a second time from their town, (see § 24.) In which example, the evil and punishment of misimproving spiritual advantages, is clearly set forth before all who hear the gospel.

\* The Jews in general seem to have mistaken their own prophecy, when they expected that the Messiah would exalt their nation to the highest pitch of wealth and power, for this was an end unworthy of so great an interposition of Providence. When the eternal Son of God came down from heaven, he had something infinitely more noble in view; namely, that by suffering and dying he might destroy him who hath the power of death, that by innumerable benefits he might overcome his enemies; that by the bands of truth he might restrain the rebellious motions of ~~man~~ wills, that by the sword of the spirit he might slay the monsters of their lusts, and that by giving them the spiritual armour he might put them in a condition to fight for the incorruptible inheritance, and exalt them to the joyful possession of the riches and honours of immortality. Wherefore, as these characters of the Messiah were in a great measure unknown to the Jews, he who possessed them was not the object of their expectation. And though he laid claim to their submission by the most stupendous miracles, instead of convincing them, these miracles made him who performed them obnoxious to the hottest resentment of that proud, covetous, sensual people. It seems they could not bear to see one so low in life as Jesus was, doing things which they fancied were peculiar to that idol of their vanity, a glorious, triumphant, secular Messiah.

§ LVIII. *The twelve apostles are sent out in the country of Nazareth.* See § 40. Mark vi. 7,—13. Luke ix. 1,—6.

WHILE Jesus preached among the villages in the neighbourhood of Nazareth, he sent his twelve apostles through the several cities of Galilee, to proclaim that God was about to establish the kingdom of Messiah, wherein he would be worshipped in spirit and in truth; and instead of all external rites and ceremonies,



ness, would accept nothing but faith, repentance, and sincere obedience. Moreover, to confirm their doctrine, he gave them power to work miracles of healing, which also would procure them acceptance. Luke ix. 1. *Then he called his twelve disciples together, (Mark, and began to send them forth by two and two) and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases.* 2. *And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.* As Mark says he sent them forth by two and two, we may suppose Matthew had an eye to that circumstance in the catalogue which he hath given of the apostles. For, ch. x. 2,—4: he hath joined them together in pairs, very probably just as they were sent out now by their Master. Jesus ordered his apostles to go by two and two, that they might encourage each other in their work. We have the history of the apostles election and commission, Matt. x. 2. § 40. But they were not actually sent out till now, that Jesus intended forthwith to enlarge the scene of his ministry. On this occasion our Lord renewed the apostles powers, and repeated the principal things contained in the instructions formerly given them, § 40. Luke ix. 3. *And he said unto them, Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, (Mark, save a staff only, see on Matt. x. 10. § 40.) nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats a-piece.* Mark vi. 9. *But be shod with sandals, and not put on two coats.* 10. *And he said unto them, In what place soever ye enter into an house, there abide till ye depart from that place.* 11. *And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them: verily I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city.* See on Matt. xi. 24. § 42. So they went away, and published the glad tidings of the approach of Messiah's kingdom, and exhorted men from that consideration, to forsake their sins, and reform their lives. 12. *And they went out and preached that men should repent.* 13. *And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them.* It is not said how long they were out on this their first expedition. Probably they spent a considerable time in it, for Luke says, ix. 6. *And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel and healing every where.*

§ LIX. *John Baptist is put to death by Herod the Tetrarch, in the city of Tiberias.* Matt. xiv. 1,—11. Mark vi. 14,—28. Luke ix. 7,—9.

THE twelve apostles preaching in the towns of Galilee, and confirming their doctrine by many mighty miracles, raised the attention and expectation of all men more than ever. For the inhabitants of Galilee could not but regard Jesus now with uncom-



men admiration, as he was evidently superior to all prophets in this respect, that besides working miracles himself, he could impart the power to whomsoever he pleased, a thing never heard of in the world before. It seems this last-mentioned circumstance, aggrandized our Lord so much, that his fame reached the court of Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee, and occasioned many speculations there. Luke ix. 7. \* *Now (Matt. at that time) Herod the tetrarch (Mark, king Herod) heard of all that was done by him: (Mark, for his name was spread abroad) he heard of the miracles performed by Jesus, and how that he had sent forth his twelve disciples with the power of miracles; and he was perplexed, because that in the course of the conversation concerning his miracles † it was said of some of the courtiers who had never heard of Jesus before, that John was risen from the dead: 8. ‡ And of some, that Elias had appeared: and of others, that one of the old prophets was risen again.* Herod's perplexity on this occasion arose from his hearing it affirmed, that John was risen. For he had put that good man to death, and no doubt dreaded the effects of his resentment. 9. *And Herod said, John have I beheaded; but who is this of whom I hear such things? And he desired to see him,* probably that he might have an opportunity of being reconciled to him. For though at first Herod affected not to believe that John was risen, yet the perplexity he was in when

\* Ver. 7. *Now Herod, &c.]* From the subsequent part of the history, wherein it is observed, that after the Baptist's disciples had buried their master, they came and told Jesus; and that he on hearing the news, retired with the apostles to the desert of Bethsaida, it is probable that the conversation at the court of Galilee concerning Jesus, happened but a few days after the Baptist's death. This suggests a reason for the inconsistency of the tetrarch's discourses, and his perplexity on hearing of the fame of Jesus. The murder of the Baptist was recent. The stings of conscience which that crime occasioned to Herod were bitter, and the rather that he had done it in an unguarded hour contrary to the dictates of his own mind. In the confusion of his thoughts he followed the multitude, though a Sadducee, in fancying that John was risen from the dead; he dreaded punishment for his crime, and he desired to see him, in expectation of accomplishing a reconciliation.

† Ibid. *It was said of some that John was risen from the dead.]* It may seem strange, that any person should have ascribed Christ's miracles to John risen from the dead, who, during his life-time, performed no miracles, John x. 41. Perhaps they imagined the power of working miracles was conferred on the Baptist to prove both his resurrection and his innocence, to clothe him with greater authority than formerly, and to render his person inviolable for the future.

‡ Ver. 8. *And of some, that Elias, &c.]* There is little difficulty in accounting for the opinion of those, who, upon Christ's appearing in this part of the country, began to take notice of his miracles, and being struck with them, imagined that he was Elias, or some of the prophets. For as they expected that Elias would actually descend from heaven, and usher in the Messiah, (Matt. xvi. 14.) and that one of the prophets was to be raised up from the dead for the same end, they might fancy Elias was come, or that one of the old prophets appeared upon the stage anew.



when he heard of it, shews plainly that he feared the worst. Besides, the other evangelists tell us, that he \* declared it to be his opinion, that John was risen. Matt. xiv. 2. *And he said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist, he is risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him.* The courtiers and servants who at first had thoughtlessly given it as their opinion, that John Baptist was risen from the dead, hearing the king declare, on better consideration, that he too believed the person of whom such strange things were told, was John Baptist, and perceiving the distress he was in on that account, endeavoured to sooth him; some of them by affirming that Elias was come; others, that the prophet promised by Moses had appeared; others, that one of the old prophets was risen from the dead. In short, all the court now concurred in assuring the king that his fears were groundless, the person he was anxious about being by no means John Baptist. Mark vi. 15. *Others said that it is Elias. And others said that it is a prophet, or as one of the prophets.* The suggestions however of Herod's guilty conscience, were too powerful to be removed by the flattery of his servants. He therefore persevered in affirming, that it was certainly John Baptist whom he had beheaded, and that he was risen from the dead. 16. *But when Herod heard them, he said, It is John whom I beheaded, he is risen from the dead.*

On this occasion, the evangelists give an account of the Baptist's death, but do not tell us precisely when it happened. Mark indeed seems to assign it as the cause of the apostles return from their first circuit; and the other evangelists mention it as the reason

\* Declared it to be his opinion that John was risen.] Erasmus indeed thinks, that as Herod was of the sect of the Sadducees, who denied the immortality of the soul, (Comp. Matt. xvi. 6. Mark viii. 15.) he might say by way of irony to his servants, Matt. xiv. 2. *This is John the Baptist: He is risen from the dead;* ridiculing the notions of the vulgar, and those who joined in that opinion. And the solution might have passed, had not Herod been perplexed on this occasion, Luke, ver. 3. The image of the Baptist, whom he wrongfully put to death, presented itself often to his thoughts, and tormented him. Therefore, when it was reported that he was risen from the dead, and was working miracles, Herod feared some punishment would be inflicted on him for his crime, and in the confusion of his thoughts, said, that John was risen from the dead, notwithstanding he was a Sadducee. Nay, he might say this, although he had heard of Jesus and his miracles before, there being nothing more common, than for persons in vehement perturbation to talk inconsistently. Besides, it is no easy matter to arrive at a steady belief of so great an absurdity as the annihilation of the human mind. The being of a God, the immortality of the soul, the rewards and punishments of a future state, with the other great principles of natural religion, often obtrude themselves upon unbelievers, in spite of all their efforts to banish them, and leave a sting behind them in the conscience, whose pain, however it may be concealed, cannot easily be allayed. Of this, Herod is a remarkable example. For, notwithstanding he was a king, his conscience made itself heard and felt amidst all the noise, the hurry, the flatteries, and the debaucheries of a court.



how why Jesus retired with them to the desert of Bethsaida. It is therefore probable, that John was put to death while the apostles were first abroad; perhaps not long before Jesus became the subject of conversation at court. Hence, because he was but lately dead, the courtiers, and even Herod himself, believed that he was risen, when they heard the fame of Christ's miracles. The Baptist had lain in prison a considerable time before he was put to death. *Matt. xiv. 3. For Herod (Mark, himself had sent forth and laid hold) had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put him in prison for Herodias' sake, \* his brother Philip's wife, Mark vi. 17. For he had married her. 18. For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife:* In some of his private conferences with the king, he had been so bold as to reprove him for his adultery with Herodias. This princess was the grand-daughter of Herod the Great, by his son Aristobulus, and had formerly been married to her uncle, Herod Philip, the son of her grand-father, by Mariamne. Sometime after that marriage, Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee, and son of Herod the Great by Malthace, (Josephus in another passage calls her Cleopatra), happening in his way to Rome to lodge at his brother's house, fell passionately in love with Herodias, and on his return made offers to her: She accepted his addresses, deserting her husband, who was only a private person, that she might share with the tetrarch in the honours of a crown. On the other hand, he, to make way for her, divorced his wife, the daughter of Aretas, king of Arabia. As Antipas was Herod the Great's son, he was brother to Herod Philip the husband of Herodias, and uncle to Herodias herself. Wherefore both parties being guilty of incest as well as adultery, they deserved the rebuke which the Baptist gave them, with a courage highly becoming the messenger of God. For though he had experienced the advantage of the tetrarch's friendship, he was not afraid to displease him when his duty required it. Herod had with great pleasure heard John's discourses, and by his persuasion had done many good actions. But now, that he was touched to the quick, he resented it to such a degree that he laid his monitor in irons. Thus it happens sometimes, that they who do not fear God sincerely, will go certain lengths in the obedience of his commandments, provided something is remitted to them by way of indulgence.

\* Ver. 17. *His brother Philip.*] Josephus calls him Herod; but he might, according to the custom of the Jews, have two names, being a different person from Philip the tetrarch of Iturea. Herod was the family name, but Philip was that by which he was distinguished from the rest of his brethren. A like example we have, Acts xii. where Luke, speaking of one of the first Herod's grandchildren, who was eaten up of worms, calls him Herod by the family name. Whereas Josephus, speaking of the same person, calls him by his proper name, Agrippa. See more examples of persons who had two names, Matt. x. 2, 3. John xi. 16. Acts. xiii. 1.



dulgence. But when they are more straitly pressed, throwing off the yoke, they not only become obstinate, but furious, which shews us, that no man has any reason of self-complacency, because he obeys many of the divine laws, unless he has learned to subject himself to God in every respect, and without exception. If Herod's resentment of the freedom which John Baptist took with him was great, that of Herodias' was much greater. The crime she was guilty of being odious, she could not bear to have it named, and far less reprov'd. She was therefore enraged to the highest pitch, and nothing less than the Baptist's head would satisfy her. Mark vi. 19. *Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him, and would have killed him, but she could not: ever since he offended her, she had been plotting against his life, but had not got her purpose accomplished.* 20. *For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed him, and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.* Great and powerful as the king was, he stood in awe of John, though in low life, and for a while durst not attempt any thing against him; such force has virtue sometimes upon the minds of the highest offenders. Matth. xiv. 5. *And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet.* At first, Herod was restrained from offering violence to the Baptist, by the secret respect he had for him on account of his piety. And though afterwards he was so wrought upon, by the repeated solicitations of Herodias, that he overcame the scruples of his conscience, he was kept from doing him harm, fearing it might have occasioned a tumult. Herodias therefore finding that she could not prevail against the Baptist in the way of direct solicitation, watched for an opportunity to destroy him by craft. At length one offered itself. Herod on his birth-day made a sumptuous entertainment for the great lords, generals, judges, and other principal persons of his kingdom. Wherefore, as it was the custom in those countries for princes to bestow favours at their feasts, sometimes of their own accord, sometimes in consequence of petitions that were then presented, Herodias thought the birth-day a fit opportunity to get the Baptist destroyed. With this view she propos'd to Salome, her daughter by Philip, who was now of age and had followed her fortunes, to dance before the company at the birth-day; pretending no doubt that it would turn out greatly to her advantage, because the king, in the excess of his good humour, would probably bid her name what she pleas'd to have, as the reward of her complaisance. Or if he should not, she might consistently enough with good manners, beg him to grant her the boon she was most desirous to obtain; only before she nam'd any particular favour, it would be proper to come out and consult with  
her



her mother \*. The thing proposed, it is true, was uncommon; yet the young lady might think it expedient in the present circumstances, or she might comply from a forwardness peculiar to youth. Whatever was her inducement, she danced and acquitted herself to the admiration of all the guests. The king in particular was perfectly charmed with her fine air and graceful motion. Mark vi. 21. *And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birth-day made a supper for his lords, high captains, and chief estates of Galilee.* 22. *And when the daughter of the said Herodias came in † and danced, (Matt. before them) and pleased Herod, and them that sat with him.* But because, according to the manners of the east, it was disgraceful for women of rank to appear in public, and they never did appear unless they were sent for, or had an important request to make, (see Esther v. 2, 3.) it was immediately concluded that this extraordinary condescension proceeded from Salome's being to ask some favour of the king. Besides, the honour she was doing to the day, and to the company, might be interpreted as a public acknowledgment of Herod's civility to her, and at the same time judged a becoming expression of her gratitude. As for the king, he considered the respect shewed his guests, as terminating upon himself; and having greatly injured the young lady by debauching her mother, he was caught with the flattery, and grew vain. His fancy also being heated with wine, and music, and the applause

\* The evangelists indeed do not speak directly of this previous concert, but Mark gives a distant hint of it. 21. *And when a convenient day was come that Herod on his birth day made a supper, &c.* For as he had mentioned the attempts which Herodias had made without success to kill the Baptist, by calling this a convenient day, an account of the feast, he insinuates, that she thought the entertainment afforded a fit opportunity to take the Baptist's life; consequently he directs us to consider all the transactions of the birth-day, which have any reference to the Baptist's death, as the effect of Herodias' contrivance. Besides, a previous concert between the mother and the daughter must be admitted, in order to account for the latter's dancing before the company on the birth-day. The reason is, in ancient times it was so far from being the custom for ladies of distinction to dance in public, that it was reckoned indecent if they were so much as present at public entertainments. The reader no doubt remembers the instance of queen Vashti, who thought it so dishonourable, that rather than submit to it, even when commanded by Ahasuerus, she forfeited her crown. He will likewise remark, that notwithstanding Herodias was a lady of no distinguished character for virtue, she had such a regard to decency and reputation, that she did not appear at this birth-day feast. We may therefore believe, it was a very extraordinary thing for young ladies of quality, to dance before large companies of men at public entertainments. If so, the reader must be sensible that this dancing of Herodias' daughter could not happen by accident, but must have been brought about by some contrivance of her mother.

† Ver. 22. *And danced and pleased Herod.*] On this, Grotius makes the following remark: *ex parte, motibus Ionicis, ut inquit Horatius, non rudi illo et incomposito saltandi genere, quod in publicis gaudiis matronis virginibusque Judæis, antiquitus usurpatum fuit.*



pleasure of his guests, the sight of the young lady dancing, and the idea of her mother, whom he passionately loved, he made her the promise he imagined she was silently soliciting; a promise, which though it had the air of royal munificence, suited but ill with the gravity of wisdom. Mark vi. 22. *The king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee.* 23. *And he swore unto her, (Matt. he promised with an oath) whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee unto the half of my kingdom.* When the plot had thus succeeded, and the young lady had obtained the king's promise, she went out to consult with her mother, who immediately disclosed her purpose, bidding her ask the Baptist's head. 24. *And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? and she said, The head of John the Baptist.* A counsel of this kind without doubt surprised Salome, for she did not see of what use the head could be to her. Besides, she might think the demand improper, as their quarrel with the Baptist, and the cause of it was universally known; not to mention that when she consented to dance, it is natural to imagine her fancy had been running on very different objects. Probably, therefore, at the first she \*scrupled to comply. But Herodias, full of the fiercest resentment against the holy man, would take no denial. She peremptorily insisted that her counsel should be followed; representing to her daughter, no doubt, that he had attempted to expel and ruin them both; and that, considering the opinion which the king still entertained of him, he might some time or other, though in irons regain Herod's favour, and accomplish his design; for which reason the opportunity of taking his life was not to be neglected if she regarded her own safety. These, or such like arguments, wrought up the young lady to such a pitch, that she not only consented to do as she was bidden, but became hearty in the cause, for (Mark vi. 25. *And*) she came in straightway with haste (*μετὰ σπουδῆς* with eagerness) unto the king. So whilst all the guests sat mute, expecting what mighty thing would be asked, the daughter of Herodias entering, demanded John Baptist's head, as of greater value to her than the half of a kingdom; and she asked, saying, *I will that thou give me by and by in a charger, the head of John the Baptist.* (Matt. *And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger.*) Sudden horror seized every heart;

\* Scrupled to comply.] This may be gathered also from the force of the word *παρακινῶμενη*, by which Matthew expresses the effect her mother's solicitation had upon her. Matt. xiv. 8. *And she (παρακινῶμενη) being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger.* According to Hesychius, *παρακινῶμενη* signifies, *infigare, incitare, impellere, to urge, excite, or impel*, and consequently supposes reluctance in the person urged. See the critics upon this word, and the dictionaries.



heart; the gaiety of the king vanished; he was confounded and vexed. But being unwilling to appear either rash, or fickle, or false, before a company of the first persons of his kingdom for rank and character, he commanded her request to be given her; not one of the guests being so friendly as to speak the least word to divert him from his mad purpose, though he gave them an opportunity to do it, by signifying to them that he performed his oath out of regard to the company. Perhaps they dreaded Herodias's resentment. 26. *And the king was exceeding sorry, yet for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her.* (Matt. *he commanded it to be given her.*) Thus, out of a misplaced regard to his oath and his guests, king Herod committed a most unjust and cruel action, which will ever reflect the greatest dishonour upon his memory. Matt. xiv. 10: *And he sent* (Mark, *an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought, and he went*) *and beheaded John in the prison. 11. And his head was brought in a charger, and given to the damsel.* The head of the prophet, whose rebukes had awed the king in his loosest moments, and whose exhortations had often excited him to virtuous actions, was immediately brought pale and bloody in a charger, and given to the daughter of Herodias, \* in presence of the guests, † *and she brought it to her mother.* The young lady gladly received the bloody present, and carried it to her mother, who enjoyed the whole pleasure of revenge, and feasted her eyes with the sight of her enemy's head, now rendered silent and harmless. But the Baptist's voice became the louder for his being murdered, filling the earth, reaching up to heaven, and publishing the woman's adultery to all ages, and to all people. Mark vi. 29. *And when his disciples heard of it, they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb:* for it was thrown over the prison-walls without burial, probably by order of Herodias.

The history of this birth-day, transmitted to posterity in the Scriptures, stands a perpetual beacon to warn the great, the gay, and the young, to beware of dissolute mirth. Admonished by so fatal an example, they ought to maintain, even in the midst of their jollity, an habitual recollection of spirit, left reason, at any time enervated by the pleasures of sense, should slacken the rein of wisdom, or let it drop, though but for a moment; because

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their

\* In presence of the guests.] This circumstance proves that the prison in which they confined the Baptist was at hand in Tiberias, where Herod kept his court, and not in Machærus Castle, as Josephus affirms; for Machærus stood upon the frontier of Perea towards Arabia, at the distance of two days journey from the capital.

† Ver. 11. *And she brought it to her mother.*] It seems Salome was of age, as may be gathered likewise from the other circumstances of the history, particularly the pleasure that her dancing gave to the company, the solemnity with which the king swore to her, and the regard which, contrary to his inclination, he shewed to his oath.



their headstrong passions, ever impatient of the curb, may catch the opportunity, and rush with them into follies, whose consequences will be *unspeakably*, it may be also *perpetually bitter*.

§ LX. *After the Baptist's death, the apostles return to Capernaum, where they find Jesus. He leaves Capernaum, and sails with them over the lake to the desert of Bethsaida. Here the people are fed by miracle the first time. See § 67. Matt. xiv. 12, —21. Mark vi. 29,—44. Luke ix. 10,—17. John vi. 1, —13.*

MATTHEW informs us, that the disciples of John, after burying their Master, came and told Jesus what had happened, and that he, upon hearing the news, departed by ship to a desert place apart. {Matt. xiv. 12. *And his disciples came* (Mark, *And when his disciples heard of it, they came*) and took up the body and buried it, (Mark, *laid it in a tomb*) and went and told Jesus. 13. *When Jesus heard of it, he departed thence by ship into a desert place apart.* Mark says, vi. 30. *And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught.* 31. *And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while; for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.* 32. *And they departed into a desert place by ship privately.* About the time that the apostles returned from their mission, and gave their Master an account of the miracles which they had performed, and of the sermons which they had preached, the Baptist's disciples arrived with the news of their Master's death. Wherefore, as Matthew hath introduced his history of our Lord's retiring into the desert of Bethsaida with an account of these things, he has assigned them as the reason for our Lord's retreat. It seems the apostles were thrown into great consternation, by the news which the Baptist's disciples brought of his death. Perhaps the account had reached them before, and had hastened their return to their Master. Mark assigns a second cause of our Lord's retreat on this occasion, namely, the continual hurry the apostles were kept in by the multitude, which thronged about Jesus to such a degree, that they had not leisure to eat their meals. The truth is, our Lord's retiring with his apostles on this occasion into a desert place, was well calculated to allay that perturbation which the idea of Herod's cruelty and injustice must have raised in their breasts, whether they had heard of it before, or whether they received the news of it only upon their return. Farther, as the fame of our Lord's miracles had brought vast crowds to Capernaum, the voyage to the desert served likewise to refresh the apostles after the fatigue of their journey, and to free them from the importunity of the multitude, who solicited cures for themselves and for their relations. Perhaps likewise  
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by this retreat our Lord proposed to shun Herod, who desired to see him, and might be contriving some method of obtaining an interview with him; for Jesus had perfect knowledge, not only of the conversation which passed at the court of Galilee, but of Herod's thoughts also. John vi. 1. *After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias.* Luke tells us, that he went with his disciples into a desert belonging to Bethsaida. ix. 10 *And he took them, and went privately into a desert place belonging to the city called Bethsaida\*.* Jesus chose this

\* Luke 10. *The city called Bethsaida.*] Bethsaida was only a village till Philip the tetrarch or Iturea adorned it with new buildings, drew a wall round it, (Ant. xviii. 3.) and called it Julias, in honour of Julia the daughter of Augustus, Bell. ii. 13. This city therefore being under Philip's jurisdiction, must have stood somewhere to the east of Jordan. Josephus has marked its situation distinctly, (Bell. iii. 18.) where he tells us, that the river Jordan falls into the lake of Gennesar, *μὲτα τὴν πόλιν Ἰουλιὰδα, behind the city Julias.* All the circumstances mentioned in the gospels, which have any relation to Bethsaida, quadrate exactly with this situation of it. Josephus indeed (Bell. ii. 8) mentions another city called Julia, in Perea, which was rebuilt by Herod, and whose ancient name was Betharamphtha, Ant. xviii. 3. But he commonly names it Julia of Perea, to distinguish it from the former. Most geographers have placed Bethsaida near Tiberias, on the western shore of the lake, founding their opinion upon John vi. 13. *There came other boats from Tiberias, nigh unto the place where they did eat bread,* as if Tiberias had been near the desert of Bethsaida, and consequently near Bethsaida itself. But the original, rightly pointed, imports only, that boats from Tiberias came into some creek or harbour, nigh unto the place where they did eat bread. The quarter from whence the storm blew, which brought them into that creek, is not inconsistent with this interpretation, because the storm may have been variable; or the boats may have come from Tiberias after the storm was laid; or *πλοῖα ἐκ Τιβεριάδος* may signify boats of, or belonging to Tiberias, not boats from Tiberias. Reland is of opinion that there were two Bethsaidas, one subject to Herod, on the western shore, in Galilee; another in Perea, belonging to Philip. And it must be acknowledged, that Bethsaida is called a town of Galilee, John xii. 21. Whereas the city of this name which Philip rebuilt, was in Gaulanitis, a division of the country different from the former, Bell. iii. 2. But to this it may be answered, that Bethsaida being situated hard by the Jordan, which, according to Josephus, divided Galilee from Gaulanitis, it might be called a town of either country. Perhaps it belonged sometimes to the one, and sometimes to the other. Farther, although, when Josephus wrote, Galilee did not extend beyond Jordan, the boundary of Herod's dominions, which that historian is describing in the passage quoted, the scriptures give the name of Galilee to the whole region lying north of the sea, (Matt. iv. 13, 14, 15.) and particularly to the tract which Josephus names Gaulanitis; for (Acts v. 37.) Gamaliel calls him Judas of Galilee, whom Josephus names Judas Gaulanitis. Nay, the latter calls him sometimes Judas of Galilee, for instance, Antiq. xx. 3. As for the argument drawn from Mark vi. 45. where it is said, that after the multitude was fed, Jesus ordered his disciples to sail, *καὶ ἐξῆλθεν πρὸς Βεθσαιδα, to the other side unto Bethsaida,* it will not prove that the dinner was given in a desert on the eastern side of the lake, opposite to Bethsaida on the west. Luke says expressly, that the desert belonged to Bethsaida, consequently in all probability it made part of its adjacent territory.



this desert as the place of his retirement, because Bethsaida, with its territory, was under Philip's jurisdiction. It is true he remained there but a little while, perhaps two or three days only, for Herod's perplexity quickly wore off. And therefore, though about the time that our Lord retired, he might be contriving means to get a sight of him, yet as he soon returned to his former state of mind, he troubled himself no farther with the matter. Or if he still desired to see Jesus, he may have left the country to go to the approaching passover, John vi. 4. (See Luke xxiii. 27.) When Jesus departed, the multitude went after him by land, and travelled with such eagerness, that they arrived at the place before him, and met him as he came ashore. Mark vi. 33. *And the people saw them departing, \* and many knew him, (αὐτον, it) knew the place whither he was going, the disciples having informed them of it. Accordingly Matthew tells us, xiv. 13. When the people had heard thereof, they followed him.* It seems the disciples loved to have the crowd always with them, for which purpose they failed not, as often as Jesus took any journey or voyage, to publish where he was going. The people who attended Jesus when he took ship, being thus informed by the apostles that he was going to the desert of Bethsaida, published the news in all the towns through which they passed in their way thither.

territory. Wherefore, as the town was situated hard by the Jordan, in sailing thither from the desert mountain, which may be supposed to have stood at the distance of five or six miles on the shore, the disciples might cross some creek or bay of the lake, so that Mark's expression is quite proper, *ὡς το πλεων προς Βηθσαιδα.*

\* Ver. 33. *And many knew him.*] *Και επιγνωσαν αυτον πολλοι.* Here Mark informs us, that the people knew whither he was going; for the relative *αὐτον* may be referred to *τοπον* in the precedent verse. Hence the translation should run, *many knew it, knew the place.* Accordingly it follows, *and ran thither a foot.* *Παζη* here, may signify *by land*, as Blackwell has shewed, (Sac. Class. v. 2. vide Indicem) for it appears from Matt. xiv. 14. that there were many with our Lord in the desert, who cannot be supposed to have walked thither. And as for their travelling with such speed as to arrive at the place before Jesus, it may easily be accounted for, if in sailing he met with a contrary wind. Some think when he received the news of the Baptist's death, he was in Perea, whither he had gone after leaving Nazareth, Mark vi. 6. Wherefore, as this country lay at the bottom of the lake westward, in going from thence to the desert of Bethsaida, Jesus had to sail the whole length of the lake northwards. If so, the people on the shore might easily run a foot to the place before him. They might do the same, even upon the supposition that Jesus now sailed from Capernaum; because either a contrary wind, or a calm, would retard the motion of his vessel, so as to give the multitude time to arrive at the place before him. The truth is, John (vi. 1.) represents our Lord as sailing cross the lake on this occasion, a circumstance which agrees better with his looking from Capernaum on the west than from the south coast. It is therefore probable, that after sending the disciples away, Jesus left the country of Nazareth and returned to Capernaum, where he waited their return from their mission, and that from Capernaum he sailed with them to the desert of Bethsaida.



thither. By this means, a much greater multitude was drawn together at his landing, than the one he had left at Capernaum; for vast numbers, upon hearing the news, ran a-foot out of these cities to the desert of Bethsaida. So Mark informs us, vi. 33. *And ran, a-foot thither out of all cities, and outwent them, and came together unto him.* John assigns the reason of the eagerness wherewith the people now followed Jesus, vi. 2. *And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased.* When Jesus came ashore, he taught the multitude with his usual goodness, and healed their sick. Matt. xiv. 14. *And Jesus went forth and saw a great multitude.* (Mark, *much people*) and was moved with compassion toward them, (Mark, *because they were as sheep not having a shepherd*). Luke ix. 11. *And he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God,* (Mark, *he began to teach them many things*) spake concerning the gospel dispensation, and he healed them that had need of healing. In these charitable offices he spent several days. This may be collected from the disciples desiring Jesus to send the people away, because they had no victuals. See on Matthew, ver. 15. On the last day of the people's attendance, (John vi. 3. *And*) *Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples.* 4. *And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh:* this circumstance, together with the observation which John makes, ver. 10. that *there was much grass in the place*, determines the time of this miracle with sufficient precision. See on John, ver. 10. Matt. xiv. 15. *And when it was \* evening,* i.e. three o'clock in the afternoon, (Mark, *When the day was now far spent*, Luke, *When the day began to wear away, then came the twelve, and said unto him*) *his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and † the time is now passed; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages* (Mark, *into the country round about, and into the villages*) *and buy themselves victuals,* (Mark, *and buy themselves bread; for they have nothing to eat*). The people had now no meat remaining. Wherefore, as it was the custom in those countries to have two or three days provision with them when they travelled, (see the first note on § 82.) we may reasonably presume, that the multitude had been with Jesus several days, before the disciples had any thoughts of dismissing them. Matt. xiv. 16. *But Jesus said unto*

\* Ver. 15. *Evening*] That the first evening, which began at three is here meant, is plain from ver. 23. of this chapter, where another evening is said to have come after the people were fed and dismissed, namely, the second evening, which began at sun-setting. See on Matth. xxviii. 1. § 149.

† Ibid. *The time is now passed.*] Ωρα denotes the season of doing any thing. Here it signifies the season of the peoples attending on Christ, which was now passed, because they had continued with him till their provision was consumed.



unto them, *They need not depart, because they have no victuals, give ye them to eat.* At the same time, to prove what notion Philip had of his power, he asked him, where a sufficient quantity of meat could be bought for them. John vi. 5. When Jesus then lift up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, i. e. gather round him, he saith unto Philip, *Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?* 6. (*And this he said to prove him; for he himself knew what he would do.*) 7. Philip answered him, \* *Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.* Mark vi. 37. *And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat?* Philip and the rest of the apostles were exceedingly surprized to hear their Master insinuate, that they could any how furnish food for such a multitude in a desert, where they had nothing but five loaves and two fishes. It seems they did not think on the proofs which he had formerly given of his power, or did not form a just notion thereof. Mark vi. 38. *He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes.* Matt. xiv. 17. *And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves and two fishes.* (John, *One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him, There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes. But what are they among so many?*) 18 *He said, Bring them hither to me.* The evangelists do not tell us whether the fishes were salted and dried, a kind of food greatly in request among the Jews, and which needed no preparation; or whether they were fresh and already prepared. Either kind was a subject equally proper for the miracle.

When the loaves and the fishes were brought, he commanded his apostles to make the whole multitude sit down by companies, each consisting of two rows, † with their faces opposite, and their backs

\* Ver. 7. *Two hundred pennyworth.*] The Roman denarius, or penny, was equal to about sevenpence half penny of English money. Two hundred of such pence therefore made above five pounds sterling.

† With their faces, &c.] This disposition appears from the words of the text, Mark vi. 39. *And he commanded them to make all sit down by companies* (συμπόσια συμπόσια) *on the green grass.* 40. *And they sit down in ranks,* the original has it *in oblong squares, by hundreds and by fifties, πρᾶτα πρᾶτα, ἀνα κατὰ ἀνα πεντακοντά.* Luke represents it thus, ch. ix. 14. *And he said to his disciples, Make them sit down by fifties in a company;* κατακλινάτι αὐτοὺς κλισίας ἀνα πεντακοντά. Συμπόσιον, the word used by Mark, signifies a company of guests at table, but κλισία, the word in Luke, denotes properly as many of them as lie on one bed, according to the ancient eastern manner of eating. By Christ's order therefore the people were to sit down to this meal in companies, consisting some of fifty persons, some of an hundred, according as the ground would admit. The members of each company I suppose were to be placed in two rows, the one row with their faces towards those of the other, as if a long table had been between



backs turned to the backs of the next companies. Mark vi. 39. *And he commanded them to make all (Matt. the multitude) sit down by companies (Luke, by fifties in a company) on the green grass.* No sooner did the disciples intimate Christ's intention to the multitude, than they sat down as they were ordered. For although what he proposed seemed in the opinion of all next to an impossibility, both the disciples and the multitude cheerfully obeyed; so great an opinion had they of Christ's wisdom and power. He ordered them to be ranged in the manner mentioned above, that they might sit compactly, that their numbers might appear, that the meat might be divided among them with ease, and that none might be neglected in the distribution. 40. *And they sat down in ranks by hundreds and by fifties.* John vi. 10. *So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. Now there was much grass in the place.* This circumstance of the grass shews that the miracle of the loaves happened in the month of February or March, when the grass is at its perfection in Syria. See Jewish Antiq. Disc. vi. and to this agrees likewise what John tells us, ver. 4. That the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh. The multitude therefore being placed, Jesus took the meat in his hands, and looking up to heaven, returned thanks to God, the liberal giver of all good, for his infinite beneficence in furnishing food to all flesh, and for the power he had conferred on him of relieving mankind by his miracles, particularly that which he was about to work, and which perhaps he prayed for, to raise the curiosity and attention of the multitude, as we find him doing before the resurrection of Lazarus, John xi. 41. John vi. 11. *And Jesus took the loaves, (Luke, the five loaves and the two fishes) and when he had given thanks, (Luke, and looking up to heaven, \* he blessed them, and brake, and) he distributed*

between them. The first company being thus set down, the second was to be placed beside the first in a like form, and the third by the second, till all were set down, the direction of the ranks being up the hill. And as the two ranks of every division were formed into one company, by being placed with their faces towards each other, so they were distinguished from the neighbouring companies, by lying with their backs turned to their backs. And the whole body thus ranged, would resemble a garden plot, divided into seed beds, which is the proper signification of *περιουσιον*, the name given by Mark to the several companies after they were formed. The difference of number found in the companies, arose probably from the situation of the ground. They were ranged on the declivity of a hill, where it happened, that on the one side ranks of twenty-five persons only could be admitted, and consequently the companies there consisted of no more than fifty each, and the ranks of twenty-five. Luke describes their disposition from that which was most prevalent, the greatest part of the people lying together by fifties in a row.

\* Luke, *He blessed them.*] Matthew and Mark say simply that *he blessed* (*εὐλογησεν*) which most commentators refer to the loaves and fishes, because Luke says expressly, *εὐλογησεν αὐτους, he blessed them.* Some however put a different



*buted to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes, as much as they would, (Mark, and the two fishes divided be among them all).* It is not to be supposed, that twelve persons could put first a piece of bread, and then a piece of fish into the hands of five thousand men, besides women and children, who were all fed with such expedition, that notwithstanding the thing was not so much as proposed to the disciples till about three, \* all was over by five o'clock in the afternoon. Wherefore it is natural to conclude, that in distributing the meat, the disciples used the most expeditious method, putting, by their Master's direction, the bread first, and after that the fish, into the hands of those only who sat at the ends of the ranks, with orders to give it to their companions. On this supposition, the meat must have extended its dimensions, not in our Lord's hands only, but in the hands of the multitude likewise, † continuing

different sense upon the word, because meat they think is not capable of being blessed. Farther they apprehend that our Lord's looking up to heaven when he blessed, mentioned by Luke himself, shews that his blessing was directed to God, and that it imported a thanksgiving for his great goodness. Accordingly, John expresses it by the word *εὐχαριστας*, which Luke, in his account of the institution of the sacrament, has substituted for the idea which Matthew and Mark express by *εὐλογίας*. For these reasons they conclude, that the words *τοῦ Θεοῦ διὰ* are suppressed by Luke, which being joined with *αὐτοῦ*, makes this sense, *He blessed God for them*, viz. the loaves and the fishes. The reader however will remember, that the word in dispute has a sense which favours the common interpretation of this passage, Psal. lxxv. 10. *Thou blessest the springing thereof*, viz. of the corn.

\* All was over by five o'clock.] This may be gathered from a circumstance mentioned, John vi. 16. namely, that when the disciples departed some time after the dinner, the second evening approached, that is, it was a little before sun-setting, at which time the second evening began. But at that season of the year, the sun set before six o'clock in the afternoon, for the passover, and consequently the vernal equinox, was not come, John vi. 4. Besides, they were in the midst of the lake by the time the sun was set. Matt. xiv. 23. Mark vi. 47.

† This suggests more reasons for the peoples being set down in the manner above explained. For as they were fed on a mountain, we may reasonably suppose that the ground was somewhat steep, and that they lay with their heads pointing up the hill, in such a manner, that reclining on their elbows, they were almost in a sitting posture, and had their eyes fixed on Jesus, who stood below them in a place that was more plain, at a little distance from the ends of the ranks. Without doubt therefore they all heard his thanksgiving and prayer for the miracle, saw him give the disciples the meat, and were astonished above measure when they perceived, that instead of diminishing it increased under his creating hands. Moreover, being set down in companies consisting some of fifty, some of a hundred persons, according as the ground would admit; and every company being divided into two ranks, which lay fronting each other, the ranks of all the companies were parallel, and pointed toward Jesus, and so were situated in such a manner, that the disciples could readily bring the bread and fish to them that sat at the extremities of the ranks. To conclude, by this disposition



ing to swell till there was a greater quantity than they who ~~had~~ it could make use of; so that breaking off what was sufficient for themselves, they gave the remainder to the persons next them, who, in like manner, saw the bread and fish swell in their own hands, till they also had enough and to spare. The meat being thus created among the hands of the multitude, and before their eyes, as long as there was a single person to be fed, they did all eat and were filled, to their unspeakable astonishment. Luke ix. 17. *And they did eat, and were all filled.* John vi, 12. *When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.* Though Jesus was entirely free from worldly cares, and from all anxiety about futurity, he did not think it unworthy of him on this occasion, to order his disciples to take care of the broken pieces of meat left by the multitude. The reason mentioned by him for their doing so, namely, *that nothing might be lost*, deserves our notice; for it shews us, that he to whom the earth and the fulness thereof belongs, willeth every man to take due care of all the goods which he possesses, and that if he wastes any thing by carelessness or profusion, he is guilty of sin; namely, the sin of despising the creatures of God, which by so admirable & contrivance as the frame of the world, God has produced for his use. Wherefore, as by feeding so many, Jesus has set us an example of liberality, so by taking care of the fragments, he has taught us frugality; and by joining the two together, he has shewed us that charity and frugality ought always to go hand in hand, and that there is a great difference between the truly liberal and the lavish man. 13. *Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves* (Mark, *and of the fishes*) *which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.* Matt. xiv. 21. *And they that had eaten* (Mark, *of the loaves*) *were about five thousand men, besides women and children.* In computing the number of persons fed at this meal, the evangelists mention none but the men, and of them only such as were of age; and they all agree that they were about five thousand. In this they do not speak by guess; for the disposition of the multitude in ranks of a determinate number, enabled them to make the computation with certainty. If they were not five

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thousand

disposition there must have been such a space between the two ranks of each company, that every individual in it could easily survey the whole of his own company, as well those above him, as those below him; and therefore when the meat was brought, and handed from one to another, they would all follow it with their eye, and see it swelling, not only in their own hands, but in the hands of their companions likewise, to the amazement and joy of every person present. The evangelists indeed give very short accounts of our Lord's miracles. Nevertheless, the nature of these miracles, and the few circumstances which they have mentioned, sometimes suggest many astonishing ideas, which vulgar and unattentive minds altogether overlook.



thousand precisely, one of the ranks incomplete will make them less, and an additional rank, or part of a rank, will make them more. But besides the men, there were women also and children, who, we may suppose, \* were not inferior in number to the men; and who, if they were not fed with the men, as is probable from John 10. must have been set down by themselves to a separate meal, some of the disciples being appointed to wait on them and serve them. This vast multitude of people finding their hunger removed, and spirits recreated, as well as their taste delighted by the meal, were absolutely sure it was no illusion. As John expresses it very properly, ver. 14. *They had seen the miracle*, so could not entertain doubts, or form objections. In this manner did he who is the bread of life, feed upwards of ten thousand people with five loaves and two small fishes, giving a magnificent proof, not only of his goodness, but of his creating power. For after all had eaten to satiety, the disciples took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces of meat, each disciple a basket, in which, as every one of the multitude may be supposed to have left a little, there must have been much more than the quantity at first set before the Lord to divide. The stupendous miracle, therefore, without all doubt, was conspicuous, not to the disciples only, who carrying each his basket in his hand, had an abiding sensible demonstration of its truth, but to every individual guest at this divine feast, who had all felt themselves delighted, filled, refreshed, and strengthened by the meal. Anciently, Elisha fed an hundred men with twenty barley loaves, 2 Kings iv. 42. But the quantity of the food divided was greater, and the people fed therewith incomparably fewer than at our Lord's miracle. Besides, though something was left at Elisha's feast to shew that the men were filled, it was but a trifle in comparison of the quantity left by the great multitude whom our Lord fed.

This being one of the most astonishing, and at the same time the most extensively convincing of all the miracles Jesus performed during the course of his ministry, every one of the evangelists has recorded it; and, which is remarkable, it is the only one found in each of their histories.

\* Were not inferior in number to the men.] The evangelist John gives the reason that so great a crowd was now with Jesus. The passover was at hand, chap. vi. 4. consequently numbers from every corner being on the roads to Jerusalem, they might be drawn round Christ by the fame of his miracles, of which they desired to be the eye-witnesses.

§ LXI. *The multitude propose to make Jesus a king. He persuades them to depart, and orders the disciples to sail away before him. They are retarded by contrary winds. Jesus walks upon the sea, draws nigh to their boat, and makes Peter also*  
to



*to walk upon the sea. They arrive at Capernaum. - Matt. xiv. 22,—34. Mark vi. 45,—53. John vi. 14,—21.*

THE people thus fed by miracle were unspeakably astonished, for indeed it was wonderful to see and feel the meat extending itself among their hands. In the height of their transport, they proposed to take Jesus by force, and make him a king, that is, would constrain him to assume the title of Messiah without farther delay. Anciently it was usual for great men who courted the favour of the populace, to give public feasts, at which they would treat all the inhabitants of a town or city. (Jof. Bell. ii. 1.) Le Clerc therefore fancies, that the multitude took the miracle of the loaves for a thing of this kind, and that they expressed their gratitude to Jesus, by offering to aid him in what they supposed was his purpose. Yet the reader may think it as probable, that in this they fulfilled their own inclinations, which led them to wish for the coming of Messiah's kingdom, wherein they all expected to enjoy great secular advantages. For to say the truth, they might very naturally imagine, that he who with five loaves and two fishes could feed so many thousands, was in a condition to support armies any length of time he pleased. But Jesus knowing both the purposes of the multitude, and the inclination of the disciples to encourage them in those purposes, ordered the latter to get into their boat and make for Bethsaida, while he should dismiss the former. The disciples therefore expressed great unwillingness to depart. They would not go till he constrained them. It seems they would gladly have detained the people, with whom they fully agreed in sentiment. For it was their opinion also, that he who could feed such a number with so little, had no reason to conceal himself, but without running the least risk, might take the title of Messiah whenever he pleased. Besides, they certainly supposed that the favourable moment was come, the people being in such a proper temper, that if Jesus but spoke the word, they would all to a man have listed under him, and formed an army immediately. John vi. 14. *Then those men when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world: the prophet predicted by Moses, the Messiah. 15. When Jesus therefore perceived, that they would come and take him by force to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone. But before Jesus went into the mountain, several things happened which the other evangelists have related. For when the miraculous dinner was over, Jesus perceiving the disposition of the multitude, went down from the hill where he had fed them to the shore, and sent his disciples off in their boat to Bethsaida. The multitude also who had followed him down the hill, he persuaded to depart; then went up again into the mountain. To*  
this



this agrees John's manner of telling the story. For as it is he who has informed us, that the miraculous dinner was given on a mountain, vi. 3. when he tells us here, that *Jesus departed again into a mountain (as to eyes, into the mountain)*, he insinuates, that on some occasion or other he had come down from it. Matt. xiv. 22. *And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, (Mark, unto Bethsaida) while he sent the multitudes away.* John xv. 16. *And when even was now come, his disciples went down into the sea, 17. And entered into a ship, and went over the sea towards Capernaum.* Their Master's order was, that they should go to Bethsaida, as Mark informs us; but the wind becoming contrary, as we shall see immediately, they were obliged to sail towards Capernaum. John therefore describes the voyage, not as it was intended, but as it actually happened. The evangelists have not told us how the twelve baskets full of fragments were disposed of. Probably the disciples carried them with them into the boat. So that having before their eyes this most convincing evidence of the miracle, they no doubt discoursed about it among themselves as they sailed, and deliberately reflected on every circumstance which had accompanied it. The people perceiving that Jesus intended to stay, made no scruple to let the disciples go. Perhaps they imagined he was sending them away, to provide such things as he had need of in order to the expedition. Neither did they refuse to disperse when he commanded them, proposing all to return next morning, as they actually did; a circumstance which proves that they did not go far away.

The multitude being dispersed, Jesus went up into the mountain, where he spent the evening in contemplation and prayer. Matt. xiv. 23. *And when he had sent the multitudes away, and his disciples, he went up into a mountain apart to pray. 24. And when the evening was come, he was there alone. But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves, for the wind was contrary.* The disciples having met with a contrary wind, could not keep their course to \* Bethsaida, which was situated northwards,

\* Bethsaida, which was situated northwards, about a league or two from the desert mountain.] If Bethsaida had been at a greater distance, Jesus would hardly have sent the disciples away, nor would they have consented to go; but as it was only a few miles off, he could easily walk thither on foot. By the way, this explains John vi. 17. where we are told, that the disciples, *when it was evening, went towards Capernaum.* They rowed hard to keep their course to Bethsaida, but could only make Capernaum, the wind being contrary, and the sea running high by reason of the storm. Or, since John represents them as sailing towards Capernaum before the storm arose, we may conceive his meaning in this manner. Capernaum lying on the west side of the lake, in sailing from the mountain on the eastern shore to Bethsaida, which stood just where the Jordan runs into the lake, they would be obliged to launch out into the deep, as if they had



northwards, about a league or two from the desert mountain, on which the miraculous dinner was given. They rowed therefore against the wind, to keep as near their course as possible. But they were so tossed with the wind and the sea, that they made no way. For in the beginning of the night they were so near the shore, that notwithstanding the day-light was quite gone, which is what John means by its being dark, Jesus saw them from the mountain toiling in rowing. Mark vi. 47. *And when even was come, (John, And it was now dark) the ship was in the midst of the sea, i. e. according to the Hebrew idiom, in the sea. See on Matt. xii. 40. § 48. and be alone on the land. 48. And he saw them toiling in rowing, (for the wind was contrary). Nay they made so little way, that in the fourth watch of the night, i. e. after three o'clock in the morning, they had gotten only about one league from the shore. But though Jesus beheld the distress of his disciples, and was about to appear for their relief, they did not see him, neither were they expecting deliverance from him. Thus when the stormy billows of affliction beat upon, and are ready to overwhelm God's people, they are apt to think he hath forgotten them, though he is looking at them all the while, takes particular notice of every thing that befalls them, and is about to work their deliverance in a manner altogether unexpected. In such cases, he oft times of a sudden calms the storm, makes every thing serene around them, and happily brings them into safe port. So Jesus, who had left his disciples alone in the present danger, that he might teach them to rely in the greatest extremities on the providence of God, went to save them, walking upon the sea. Mark vi. 48. *And about the fourth watch in the night, he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea. John vi. 19. So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship. Mark vi. 48. And would have passed by them.* This latter circumstance made them all suppose, that what they saw was a spectre or evil spirit, (*φάντασμα*):—they therefore shrieked for fear. 49. *But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out. 50. For they all saw him, and were troubled.* Wherefore, to make them easy, he quickly drew near, and discovered himself to them. *And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer, it is I, be not afraid:* re-animating them by his presence and voice, which they were all perfectly acquainted with. The apostle Peter, a man of a warm and forward temper, looking at Jesus walking upon the sea, was exceedingly struck*

had intended for Capernaum, the wind being somewhat contrary. And because in the issue they actually landed there, John represents them as sailing thither at the first. Mark, however, relating this matter more particularly, tells us, that they set out with a design to go to Bethsaida.



struck with it, and conceived a mighty desire of being enabled to do the like. Wherefore, without weighing the matter, he immediately begged that Jesus would bid him come to him on the water. Matt. xiv. 28. *And Peter answered him, and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.* He did not doubt but his Master would gratify him, as he thought he paid him a compliment; his request insinuating, that he would undertake any thing, however difficult, at Christ's command. \* There was no height of obedience to which Peter would not soar, though in the issue it appeared, that the pinions of his faith had not strength to bear him up. Accordingly our Lord, to shew him the weakness of his faith, and to bear down that high opinion he seems to have entertained of himself, as well as to demonstrate the greatness of his own power, granted Peter his request. For in supporting him on the water along with himself, he appeared greater than if he had walked thereon singly. Besides, it might be designed to obviate the conceit of the Marcionites, Manicheans, and other ancient heretics, who from this passage of the history pretended to prove, that our Lord did not assume a real human body, but only the appearance of one. 29. *And he said unto him, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water to go to Jesus.* Peter being thus permitted to walk upon the sea, it flattered his vanity not a little when descending from the vessel he found the water firm under his feet. Hence, at the first he walked towards his Master with abundant confidence; but the wind becoming more boisterous than before, made a dreadful noise, and the sea raging at the same time, shook him in such a manner, that he was on the point of being overturned. His courage staggered. In the hurry of his thoughts, he forgot that Jesus was at hand, and fell into a panic. And now the secret power of God, which, while Peter entertained no doubt, had made the sea firm under him, began to withdraw itself. In proportion as his faith decreased, the water yielded, and he sank. In this extremity he looked round for Christ, and on the very brink of being swallowed up, cried to Jesus for help. Matt. xiv. 30. *But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried, Lord, save me.*—Jesus dealt very mercifully with his apostle, in not suffering him to

\* [There was no height of obedience to which Peter would not soar.] That this was the true language of his action, may be gathered from the following circumstance. It would have been perfectly ridiculous in the apostle, to have asked such a proof of the person's being Jesus who spake to him, as, had it failed, would have become fatal to himself. No man in his senses can be supposed to have desired a proof of that kind. Peter's request therefore should have been translated, Matt. xiv. 28. *Seeing it is thou, command me to come unto thee on the water.* The particle *u* being here put for *επει*, according to the Hebrew form of using the particles promiscuously. See Acts iv. 9. 11, 17. in the Greek.



to drop to the bottom at once. 31. *And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?* Peter did not doubt that it was Jesus who walked upon the water. He must have been convinced of that, before he left the vessel; nay, must have been convinced of it while he was sinking, else he would not have called to him for assistance. But he was afraid that Jesus could not, or would not support him against the wind, which blew more fiercely than before; a doubt most unreasonable and culpable, since it was as easy to support him against the storm, as to keep him up on the water, which Jesus had virtually promised to do in his permission, and which he had actually performed when Peter first left the vessel. The people of God, warned by this example, should beware of presumption and self-sufficiency, and in all their actions should take care not to be precipitate. Wherever God calls them, they are boldly to go, not terrified at the danger or difficulty of the duty; his providence being always able to support and protect them. But he who goes without a call, or proceeds farther than he is called, who rushes into difficulties and temptations without any reason, may by the unhappy issue of his conduct, be made to feel how dangerous a thing it is for one to go out of his sphere. John vi. 21. *Then they willingly received him into the ship.* Being convinced by the miracle of making Peter walk upon the sea, that it was no spectre, but their Master, they received him into the ship with joy, in expectation perhaps that he would make the wind and the sea calm. Nor were their hopes frustrated. For as soon as he came into the boat, the storm ceased so suddenly, that they were all sensible it was the effect of his power and will; an opinion which they would be confirmed in, if, as on other occasions, he now rebuked the wind and the sea. Mark vi. 51. *And he went up unto them into the ship, and the wind ceased.* On this occasion Jesus seems to have wrought another miracle also; for no sooner had he hushed the storm, than, driven by his power, they found themselves with their boat, in an instant safe at land. John 21. *Then they willingly received him into the ship, \* and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.* John tells us, ver. 17. that “they went over the sea towards Capernaum.” The country of Gennezareth: herefore, where they landed, as Matthew and Mark tell us afterwards, was not far from Capernaum. According to Josephus, Bell. iii. 18. the land of Gennezareth ran thirty furlongs

\* Ver. 21. *And immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.* That there was a miracle here is probable; for when Jesus came to the disciples walking upon the sea, they had rowed only twenty-five or thirty furlongs from the desert mountain, John vi. 19. that is, but half the distance between the mountain and the town of Capernaum, nigh to which they landed, the breadth of the lake, which lay between the two places, John vi. 17. being forty-eight furlongs, § 25.



longs along the shore of the lake, and was in breadth twenty. When Jesus came to the disciples, they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs; wherefore, as the lake was forty furlongs broad, the boat was miraculously driven in an instant, at least ten furlongs. The hushing of the storm, and their instantaneous arrival at the land, astonished the disciples exceedingly, and made them wonder at the greatness of their Master's power. For though he had so lately performed the miracle of the loaves; nay, though they had the sensible proof thereof before their eyes, in the baskets of fragments which they had taken with them into the ship, and perhaps had been talking of it before the storm came on, they were so stupified with their fear, that they did not reflect on that miracle. Mark vi. *And they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered.* 52. *For they considered not the miracle of the loaves; for their heart was hardened.* We need not therefore be surprized, that they did not call to mind a similar exertion of his power, which they had beheld while they sailed to the country of the Gadarenes. Matth. xiv. 33. *Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth, thou art the Son of God, i. e. the Messiah.* See § 15. Though on many occasions formerly, Jesus had given equal if not greater evidences of his power, the disciples did not till now make open confession of his dignity. It seems, when his miracles came thus to be multiplied, but especially when they followed upon one another so close, the apostles were more deeply affected with them, than by seeing him perform a single miracle only. No wonder, therefore, that they were now perfectly confirmed in the opinion which they had so justly conceived of him.—Mark vi. 53. *And when they had passed over, they came into the land of Gennezareth, and drew to shore, και διαπερασαντες ηλθον επι της γης Γεννησαρτ, and having passed over, they arrived at the land of Gennezareth.* See on John, ver. 16. *και προσεμυσθισαν, and they came to anchor; they fixed the ship in her station,* a little while after she came to the land whither they went (John ver. 21.) for between her arrival at land, and her being fixed in her station by casting anchor, the particulars happened which are told by Mark, ver. 52. and Matthew, ver. 33.

§ LXII. *Jesus arrives at Capernaum. The sermon and conversation in the synagogue there, occasioned by the miracle of the loaves. During our Lord's stay in Capernaum, many miraculous cures are received by touching his clothes.* Matt. xiv. 35, 36. Mark vi. 54, 55. John vi. 22,—71.

THE evangelists Matthew and Mark, omitting the conversation in the synagogue of Capernaum, which happened the day after the miracle of the loaves, and consequently on the very day that Jesus arrived at Capernaum, give us, in a few words, the transactions.



tions of several days, perhaps weeks, that is to say, the transactions of the whole space which passed between our Lord's arrival in Capernaum after the miracle of the loaves, and his departure to the passover, which John tells us was then at hand. These passages therefore naturally come in after the 6th chapter of John, because the miracles described in them were performed some days after the conversation in the synagogue, recorded in that chapter. Nevertheless, as the two evangelists have narrated these miracles in connection with our Lord's arrival at Capernaum, it will not be improper to speak of them here. Mark vi. 54. *And when they were come out of the ship, straightway they* (Matt. *the men of that place*) *knew him.* 55. *And ran* (Matt. *They sent out*) *through that whole region round about. And began to carry about in beds those that were sick, where they heard he was.* Jesus ordinarily resided in this neighbourhood; but he had been absent for some time. Wherefore, the inhabitants being well acquainted with him, knew him immediately on his landing to, be that great prophet who commonly resided in the neighbouring town of Capernaum, and who had done numberless miracles among them. Being therefore glad that he was returned, they sent messengers to all their friends and acquaintance in the country round about who were sick, desiring them to come and be cured. This happened immediately on his landing, and before he entered Capernaum. The people rejoicing at the opportunity, came after a few days in great crowds, carrying their sick in beds, and bringing them to Jesus, whether he was in Capernaum or in the neighbouring country. For he tarried here till he took his journey to the passover. The number of the sick brought to him to be cured was so great, that he could not bestow particular attention upon each of them. They and their friends, therefore, besought him to grant them the favour of touching, if it were but the extremity of his clothes, being certain of obtaining thereby a complete cure. Nor were their expectations disappointed; for as many as touched him were made perfectly whole, whatever the distemper was which they laboured under. Matt. xiv. 35. *And brought unto him all that were diseased.* 36. *And besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment; and as many as touched were made perfectly whole,* and that whether they were good or bad people; not because there was any virtue in his garments, otherwise the soldiers who gat them at his crucifixion might have wrought miracles, but because Jesus willed it to be so. For it was now the acceptable time, the day of salvation foretold by Isaiah, (ch. xliv. 8.) and Christ's volition was sufficient to remove any distemper whatsoever. This pitch of faith seems to have been wrought in the sick multitude, by the instance of her who had lately been cured of a flux of blood at Capernaum, upon touching the hem of



our Lord's garment, Matt. ix. 20. and by the instances mentioned in the explication of Luke vi. 19. § 38.

And now, to return to the people whom Jesus had fed by miracle; notwithstanding he had ordered them to go home, after he had sent his disciples away, they did not leave the desert mountain. It seems they took notice that no boat had come thither, but the one belonging to the disciples; and because Jesus did not go with them, they concluded he had no design to leave his attendants. Wherefore, though by withdrawing into the mountain, he modestly declined the dignity which they had offered him, they persuaded themselves he would be prevailed upon to accept it the next day; especially as they might fancy the disciples were dispatched to prepare matters for that purpose. In this hope, they remained all night about the foot of the mountain in the clefts of the rocks, making the best shift they could to defend themselves from the storm; and as soon as the morning was come, they went up designing to wait on Jesus. But they did not meet with him, though they searched for him up and down the mountain. At length they began to think he had gone off in one of the boats belonging to Tiberias, which, during the storm, had taken shelter in some creek or other at the foot of the mountain. The most forward of the multitude therefore entering those boats, sailed to Capernaum, the known place of our Lord's residence, where they found him in the synagogue teaching the people, (John vi. 59.) and asked him with an air of surprise, how, and when he came thither? John vi. 22. *The day following, i. e. the day after the miracle of the loaves, being the same day that Jesus arrived at Capernaum, when the people which stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was none other boat there, save that one wherein his disciples were entered, and that Jesus went not with his disciples into the boat, but that his disciples were gone away alone.* 23. *Howbeit, there came other boats from Tiberias, nigh unto the place where they did eat bread after the Lord had given thanks,* 24. *When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they also took shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus,* 25. *And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither?—*26. *Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye seek me not because ye saw the miracles. Ye are not come after me, because ye were convinced by my miracles of the truth of my mission, and are now disposed to hearken unto my doctrine, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled: having been once fed, you expect that I will feed you frequently by miracle, and the satisfaction you found in that meal, has made you conceive great hopes of temporal felicity under my administration. These are the views with which you are following me; but you are entirely mistaken*



mistaken in them; for your happiness does not consist in the meat that perisheth, neither is it that sort of meat which Messiah will give you.—Wherefore, ye ought not to labour so much for the meat that perisheth, mere animal food, which nourishes and delights the body only, as for the meat that endureth to everlasting life, divine knowledge, and grace, which by invigorating all the faculties of the soul, makes it incorruptible and immortal. Neither ought you to follow the Son of man, the Messiah, with a design to obtain the meat that perisheth, but in expectation of being fed with the meat that endureth to everlasting life, for it is that meat which he will give you. 27. *Labour not only* ( $\mu\eta$  being put here for  $\mu\eta$   $\mu\omega\omega\iota$ , see on Luke xiv. 12. § 92.) *for the meat that perisheth, but also for that meat which endureth to everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you.—For him hath God the Father sealed:* by the miracle of the loaves, God the Father shews you that he hath enabled and authorized me the Son of man, to bless you with the meat enduring to everlasting life, the food of your souls. The epithet of *Father* is elegantly given to God in this passage, as it expresses the relation he stands in to the person who in the precedent clause is called *the Son of man*. The metaphors of *meat* and *drink* being very familiar to the Jews, and frequently used in their writings to signify, wisdom, knowledge, and grace, (see Prov. ix. 1,—5. Isa. lv. 2, 3.) they might easily have understood what Jesus meant by the meat enduring to everlasting life: Nevertheless, they mistook him altogether, imagining that he spake of some delicious, healthful, animal food, which would make men immortal, and which was not to be had but under the Messiah's government. Accordingly, being much affected with his exhortation, they asked him what they should do to work the works of God; they meant to erect the Messiah's kingdom, and obtain that excellent meat which he said God had authorized Messiah to give them; works which they imagined were prescribed them by God, and would be most acceptable to him. John vi. 28. *Then said they unto him, What shall we do that we might work the works of God?* 29. *Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.* The Jews having their minds filled with the notion of the great empire which Messiah was to erect, expected no doubt that Jesus would have bidden them first rise against the Romans, and vindicate their liberties, and then by the terror of fire and sword, establish Messiah's authority in every country. Wherefore, when he told them that the whole work which God required of them towards erecting Messiah's kingdom, was, that they should believe on Messiah whom he had now sent unto them, they were exceedingly offended, thinking that he could not be the Messiah promised in the law and the prophets. And some more audacious than the rest, had



had the confidence to tell him that since he pretended to be Messiah, and required them to believe in him as such, notwithstanding his character was entirely different from that of the great deliverer described in their sacred books, being so humble and peaceable as to refuse the crown which of right pertained to Messiah, and which they had offered him, it would be proper that he should shew greater miracles than their law-giver had performed, otherwise they would not be to blame, if believing Moses and the prophets, they persisted in their ancient faith concerning Messiah, and concerning the duty which they owed him. 30. *They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then that we may see and believe thee* (to be the Messiah?) *what dost thou work? Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, (Ps. lxxviii. 24.) He gave them bread from heaven to eat.* By extolling the miracle of the manna, by calling it *bread from heaven*, and by insinuating that it was Moses' miracle, the Jews endeavoured to disparage both Christ's mission and his miracle of the loaves, which they affected to despise as no miracle in comparison. It was only a single meal of terrestrial food, at which nine or ten thousand had been fed. Whereas Moses, with celestial food, fed the whole Jewish nation, in number upwards of two millions, and that not for a day, but during the space of forty years in the wilderness. Wherefore, as if Jesus had done no miracle at all, they said to him, *What sign shewest thou? what dost thou work?* Jesus replied, 32. *Verily verily I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread* (*το ατρον, the bread*) *from heaven: it was not Moses who in ancient times gave you the manna: neither was the manna bread from heaven, though it be so called by the Psalmist, on account of the thing which it typified, for it dropped from the air only.—But my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven: by the miracle of the loaves, my Father has pointed out to you the true, spiritual, heavenly bread which he himself giveth you, which the manna was only a symbolical representation of, and which is sufficient to sustain, not a single nation only, but the whole world.* 33. *For the bread of God is he which* (is what) *cometh down from heaven* (*Ο γαρ ατρος το ουρου καταβαινον εν το γειναι*) *and giveth life unto the world.* The manna which dropt from the air, and kept those who made use of it alive only for a day, cannot be called the bread of God; but that is the bread of God which cometh down from God, and maketh the eater virtuous, happy, and immortal like God.

It is reasonable to imagine, that the people who now heard our Lord, were of different characters. Many of them no doubt were obstinately perverse, heard him with prejudice, and wrested all his words. But others of them might be men of honest dispositions, who listened to his doctrine with pleasure, and were ready to obey it. This latter sort, therefore, having heard him describe



describe the properties of the celestial bread, were greatly struck with the thoughts of it, and expressed an earnest desire to be fed with it always. John vi. 34. *Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.* 35. *And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: I am the bread of God which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life to the world. He that cometh to me for the sustenance of his life, shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst: because I am the bread of life, they who believe on me shall in due time be raised to the enjoyment of a life free from all the painful appetites and sensations which accompany mortality, and shall be made immortal and perfectly happy.* Thus he assigned one of the many reasons, why he called himself the bread of life, (see verses 47, 48. 51.) The conclusion from this part of his discourse was so evident, that he left his hearers to draw it for themselves. It was this: since matters are so, I am evidently greater than Moses, even in respect of that for which you extol him most. He gave your fathers manna, which was a bodily food only, and nourished nothing but the natural life. But I am myself the bread of life and food of the soul, making men both immortal and happy.—He next turned his discourse to those of his hearers who did not possess that goodness of heart which the former had expressed. 36. *But I said unto you, that ye also have seen me and believe not: ye ask me to shew you a sign, that ye may see and believe me, (ver. 30.)* Why truly I must tell you, that you *have seen me*, seen my character and mission in the miracles which I have performed already, that is, you have seen me perform many signs sufficient to convince you that I am the Messiah. Nevertheless, you do not believe that I am he, but reject me as an impostor. Therefore your infidelity proceeds, not from want of evidence, as you pretend, (ver. 30.) but from the perverseness of your own disposition, which perhaps in time may be overcome. For, 37. *All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me, that is, shall believe on me, (ver. 35.)* There have been many disputes about the meaning of the Father's *giving men to Christ*. I think our Lord himself has determined it by the parallel expression, ver. 44. "No man can come to me except the Father draw him." To give men to Christ, therefore, is to draw men to Christ. If so, the sense of the passage is, all that the Father draweth to me (see on ver. 44.) shall believe on me, however obstinate they may be for a season. This was fit matter of comfort to Jesus, under the present infidelity of the Jews. By this likewise he encouraged his disciples who had already believed on him. In the mean time he invited those who were disposed to believe, from the consideration that he would not reject them, however low their circumstances might be, however vile they might appear in their own eyes, or however much they might have formerly injured him,



him, by speaking evil of him, and opposing him. *And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.* 38 *For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me :* I came not to act according to the bent of human passions, which lead men to return whatever injuries are done them; and therefore I will not instantly leave off exhorting those who at first reject me, neither will I inflict immediate punishment on them; but I will bear with them, and try all possible means to bring them to repentance, that they may be saved; for I am come to do the will of him that sent me. 39. *And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day :* it is the will of the Father that every thing necessary be done, both for the conversion of those who are disposed by him to believe, and for the preservation of those in the paths of righteousness who have already believed, that none of them whom he has given me may be lost by me. For they must all be presented before him safe at the last day John vi. 40. *And this (likewise) is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, seeth the character and mission of the Son in the miracles which he worketh, and in the other evidences wherewith his mission is attended, as is evident from ver. 36.—and believeth on him, may have everlasting life : and I will raise him up at the last day.* It is the fixed determination of the Father to bestow everlasting life on all who truly believe in me. Wherefore, in order to that, I will raise them up at the last day. Thus Jesus placed the character of Messiah in a light very different from that in which his hearers had been accustomed to view it, and taught them that instead of the temporal blessings which they expected from him, they were to receive none but spiritual benefits. Hence, as the dispositions of the greatest part of them were carnal, his doctrine offended them, especially his affirming that he was the bread of life, (ver. 35.) and that he came down from heaven, (ver. 33.) 41. *The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven.* 42 *And they said, Is not this Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know ? How is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven ? Was he not born into the world as other men are, and are we not well acquainted with his parents, and know him to be earth-born ? How then can he pretend to have come down from heaven ? The Jews did not find fault with Jesus for insinuating that Messiah should come down from heaven; that was a point universally believed. (See on Matt. iv. 6. § 17.) But they were displeased, because he said that he had come down from heaven; a thing which they could by no means believe, in regard they were well acquainted with his father and mother.*



ther. 43. *Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, "Murmur not among yourselves. 44. \* No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day; ye need not object my birth on earth, and the meanness of my relations, as things inconsistent with my heavenly extraction; for I assure you, that while you believe your teachers who have greatly corrupted divine revelation, and entertain the prejudices wherewith they have filled your minds, and follow the sensual inclinations which have hitherto governed you, you cannot believe on me. No man can believe on me, except the Father who hath sent me draw him, that is, persuade him. Jesus added, ye need not be surprised when I tell you, that no man can believe on Messiah, except the Father draw him. For though you may imagine that all men will flock with great cheerfulness to him, and yield themselves his willing subjects, without any extraordinary means made use of to persuade them, the prophets insinuate the contrary, when they promise that under the dispensation of the Messiah, men shall enjoy the teaching of the Father in a far more eminent manner than under any*

\* Ver. 44. *No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him.*] Le Clerc thinks the metaphor of *drawing men to Christ*, is taken from the practice of leading cattle about, with cords fastened to their heads or necks. Applied to reasonable agents, the expression does not import any force or constraint, as is plain from Jer. xxxi. 3. where God says to Israel, *with loving kindness have I drawn thee*, that is, by the manifold benefits which I have bestowed on thee, and particularly by the revelation of my will committed to thee, I have prevailed with thee to obey me. Thus also our Lord uses the expression, John xii. 32. *And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me*; that is, being put to death on the cross, and raised from the dead, and exalted into heaven, and preached through the world, I will by my word and spirit persuade many, to accompany me into heaven. See also Solom. Song, i. 4. Hos. xi. 4. Wherefore, by the Father's *drawing men to Christ*, we may understand his persuading them to believe on him, by the several proofs wherewith he has supported the mission of his Son. Accordingly, in the following verse, the effect which the Father's drawing hath upon men, is described by their *hearing and learning of the Father*. And what confirms this interpretation is, that our Lord himself ascribes the whole of the evidences of his mission to the Father; for he calls his doctrine *the word which his Father had given him*, John xvii. 8. and says expressly, that his miracles *were done by the Father*, John xiv. 10. Nevertheless, in the Father's *drawing men to Christ*, there is somewhat more included than merely his establishing the mission of his Son by sufficient evidence; for in this sense he as really draws those who do not believe, as those who do believe, contrary to the text, which says that *every man who hath heard and learned of the Father*, that is, who is drawn by him, cometh to Christ. I think it is plain, therefore, that by the Father's drawing men, we are likewise to understand, his supplying whatever influences of his spirit and grace are necessary, to impress the evidences of religion on mens minds, in such a manner as to work conviction. To conclude, as conviction supposes teachableness of disposition, and a love of truth, his drawing men to Christ must imply his bestowing on them dispositions and affections which qualify them for being drawn by him. See verse 65.



any precedent dispensation, (see Isa. liv. 13. Jer. xxxi. 34. Micah iv. 2.) 45. *It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.* Before the advent of Christ, the Father spake to the world concerning him by the prophets; and when he appeared in the human nature on earth, he demonstrated the truth of his mission by the testimony of John, and by voices from heaven declaring him to be his beloved Son, and commanding all men to hear him. He did the same likewise by the doctrines which he inspired Jesus to preach, by the miracles which he gave him to perform, and by the influences of the Spirit which he empowered him to dispense. Every one therefore that hath heard and understood what the Father has said concerning Messiah, whether by the prophets, or by John Baptist, or by the voices from heaven, or by my doctrine, miracles and spirit, and has learned thereby to form a just notion of Messiah, will believe on me as the Messiah. 46. *Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father:* when I speak of mens hearing and learning of God, I do not mean that they can see God personally, and be taught of him in the manner that a scholar is taught of his Master. No man has seen the Father personally, except the Son whom the Father has sent, and whose peculiar privilege it is to have been taught immediately of the Father, the doctrine which he preaches to men. 47. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.* 48. *I am that bread of life:* because I have been personally taught of the Father the doctrines which I preach, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life begun in him, and is as sure of being raised to the perfect enjoyment thereof, as if he had it already in his possession. The reason is, by my doctrine I deliver believers from their sinful inclinations which are the seeds of corruption, and cherish in them gracious dispositions which are the principles of eternal life. In respect of my doctrine, therefore, I am undoubtedly that bread of life which I spake to you of before. Thus Jesus explained the nature of the dignity which he had assumed to himself in the foregoing part of his discourse, (ver. 33. 35. 40.) and demonstrated that it really belonged to him. Next he ran a comparison between himself considered as the bread from heaven, and the manna which Moses provided for their fathers in the desert, and which they admired so greatly. He told them that the manna had not preserved their fathers either from the temporal or eternal death, whereas he was come down bread from heaven to make men immortal. 49. *Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.* 50. *This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, \* and not die.—*

But

\* Ver. 50. *And not die.*] The opposition between *καὶ ἀποθάνει* in verse 49.



But because it was a matter of infinite importance to his hearers, that they should form a just notion of his ability to save them, and believe in him as the Saviour of the world, he affirmed the third time, that he was himself the living bread which came down from heaven to make men immortal, and that all who did eat of it should live for ever, because he was about to give them his flesh to eat, by making it an expiation for the sins of the world. 51. *I am the \* living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever; and the bread (i. e. in this discourse might be better translated according to the Hebrew idiom, the meat) that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.* All the terms made use of by our Lord on this occasion were such as the Jews had been accustomed to interpret figuratively, for which reason they might easily have understood them. Nevertheless, taking them in a literal sense, they were astonished beyond measure, and fell into keen disputes about the meaning of them. 52. *The Jews therefore strove amongst themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?* 53. *Then Jesus said unto them, Verily verily I say unto you, † Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man,*

and *per ardua* in this, is elegant, and shews that in the former the spiritual death is meant, as well as the natural.

\* Ver. 51. *Living bread.*] There is a beautiful gradation observable in our Lord's discourse. The first time that he called himself the bread of life, ver. 35. he assigned the reason of the name somewhat obscurely. *He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall not thirst.* The second time that he called himself *the bread of life*, ver. 47. he spake to the same purpose as before, but more plainly; *He that believeth on me, hath everlasting life; therefore I am the bread of life.* And by connecting this with his affirmation, ver. 46. that he was the only teacher of mankind that had ever personally seen and been taught of the Father, he insinuated that he gave life to men by his doctrine, being on that account also *the bread of life*. The third time he called himself *bread*, he added to the name the epithet of *living*, not only because he gives life to men by raising them from the dead, and making them eternally happy, but because he giveth them this life by means of his human nature, which was not an inanimate thing like the manna, but a living substance. For he told them plainly that the bread or meat which he would give them was *his flesh, which he would give for the life of the world*, and spake of mens eating it, in order to its having that effect. But the meaning of this expression he had directed them to before, when in calling himself the bread of life, he always joined *believing on him*, as necessary to mens *living by him*. Wherefore, *to eat*, in the remaining part of this discourse, is to *believe*.

† Ver. 53. *Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood*] The *flesh* of Christ seems to be put here for the whole of his human nature, (see ver. 51.) as it is elsewhere in scripture, John i. 14. Rom. i. 3. Wherefore, by *eating his flesh* and *drinking his blood*, is not meant any corporal action, but mens receiving with thankfulness those blessings, to confer which our Lord assumed the human nature; and consequently their believing the revelation he came to make concerning the merciful counsels of God: or, as he himself expresses it, ver. 63. *the word that he spake to them,*



*man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.* To use Dr Clarke's words here: "Jesus knowing how unreasonable his hearers were, did not think fit to explain himself more particularly at this time, but persisting in the same figurative way of expressing himself, he repeated and affirmed more earnestly what he had asserted before. Except ye be entirely united to me by a hearty belief and practice of my doctrine, and partake of the merit of that sacrifice which I shall offer for the sins of the world, and continue in the communion of my religion, and receive spiritual nourishment by the continual participation of those means of grace which I shall purchase for you by my death, ye can never attain eternal life."—54. *Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day:* he has the principles of eternal life implanted in him, and shall enjoy it, because I will raise him up at the last day. 55. *For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed:* my flesh and blood (see on ver 53.) are the true nutriment of the soul. For they feed it, and make it to grow: they give vigour to all its faculties, preserve it continually alive, and make it fit for heaven. 56. *He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him;* we are most intimately connected together in the closest friendship, and therefore whatever blessings I can bestow, whether by my own power, or by my interest with the father, or by the influences of my spirit, my friends shall enjoy them in full perfection. The expression of persons dwelling in each other, occurs often in John's writings, and denotes the closest union

*them*, especially concerning his incarnation, and his dying to make atonement for sin. These articles of the Christian faith being particularly understood here. give propriety to the metaphors of *eating Christ's flesh* and *drinking his blood*, by which the whole of that faith is denominated. The reason is, of all the discoveries made by Christ, those concerning his incarnation, and the nature and ends of his own death, received and meditated upon with a lively faith, afford sovereign and salutary nourishment unto the minds of sinners. They are as effectual for sustaining the spiritual life in the soul, as flesh fitly prepared is for nourishing the animal life in the body. Dr Waterland, in his treatise on the eucharist, says, that by *mens eating Christ's flesh* and *drinking his blood*, is to be understood not faith, but its consequences; that is, mens partaking of the fruits of Christ's passion and death. And this interpretation he supports by the universality of the declaration, establishing the necessity of eating Christ's flesh, and by observing that to *believe* is not to *eat* and *drink* the fruit of Christ's passion, but is preparatory thereto as the means to the end. According to this gloss our Lord's meaning was, Except ye shall share in the atonement to be made by my sufferings, ye have no life in you, and so shall die eternally. But with respect to the universality of the proposition on which the doctor chiefly insists, it may be replied, that here, as in many other instances, an universal affirmation or negation, is to be limited by the nature of the subject to which it is applied. Except ye, to whom my doctrine is preached, believe it, ye have no life in you. As for the other arguments offered in the treatise just now mentioned, they cannot be urged against this explication.



union of affections and interests. Wherefore, according to the grand figure made use of by the apostle Paul, it signifies that he who truly believes on Christ, is so united to him as to be a member of his body, and consequently a partaker with him of his life and immortality, and of all the happiness which he himself enjoys, or is able to communicate. 57. *As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me:* as it is my meat and my drink to do the will of the Father, who is the author of life and happiness, as I nourish and delight my mind with the punctual execution of all the orders he gave me when he sent me into the world, *so he that eateth me*, he that believes my doctrine and obeys my precepts, shall find therein eternal nourishment and refreshment to his soul. Or the meaning may be, as I shall live after I am put to death, because I am sent by the Father, the author of life, and because he dwells in me, and I in him; so he that eateth me, and thereby has me dwelling in him, shall after he dies be raised again by me. 58. *This is that bread which came down from heaven:* this is the bread which, in the beginning of my discourse, I told you was come down from heaven, (ver. 33.) a kind of bread infinitely superior to the manna, both in its nature and efficacy; for it is to be eaten by you, *not as your fathers did eat manna and are dead:* it is neither to be eaten the same way that your fathers did eat the manna, nor with the same effect; but *he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.* (See ver. 50.)—59. *These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum:* he spake them openly, in the hearing of all the people who attended at public worship in the synagogue.

Most of the metaphors in this discourse, and particularly that of *food* to signify doctrine, and of *eating* and *drinking* to signify believing, were abundantly easy, and might have been understood at the very first by the Jews, being found in their scriptures and used in their schools. Only not being able to comprehend what he meant by *his flesh*, they took the whole literally, and were so offended at the thought of eating his flesh and drinking his blood, a thing not only prohibited by the law of Moses, but repugnant to the customs of all civilized nations, that many of them who were his disciples, when they heard it, said it was absurd. 60. *Many therefore of his disciples, when they heard this, said, This is an hard saying, who can bear it? who can believe and obey it?—*61. *When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?* 62. *What, and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? Are ye offended because I said my flesh is bread, and that it came down from heaven, and that you must eat my flesh and drink my blood in order to your having eternal life? What if ye shall see*



me ascend up into heaven bodily, where I was before? Will not that convince you of the truth of my having come down from heaven? Will it not shew you likewise, that I never intended you should eat my flesh in a corporal manner? 63. *It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life:* when I spake of your eating my flesh, I did not mean it in a literal sense. So used, my flesh would be of no advantage at all to any man. But I meant your believing the doctrines, to reveal which I was made flesh, by taking upon me the human nature. So that more properly it is my spirit that giveth life to men and maketh them immortal. For *the words* that I speak to you, the doctrines that I preach, proceed from my spirit, and are the food of your souls, consequently the means of your life. To some of you however my doctrine will be ineffectual, because you do not believe it, and perhaps are desirous to pervert it, that you may have a pretence to forsake me. 64. *But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.* He knew the inward disposition of every particular person that heard him, and foresaw which of his disciples would be so base as to betray him. 65. *And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my father:* because I know perfectly the inward frame of your minds, therefore I told you that no man can believe on me, except an opportunity of knowing the evidence of my mission, a capacity to judge of it, and such a hearty love of the truth as will prompt him to use the means proper for discovering it, and when discovered, dispose him cheerfully to receive it, are given him of my Father. The words of this verse, with those mentioned ver. 37. are our Lord's own paraphrase of that difficult expression, ver. 44. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him:" wherefore the explication given of it above must be just. This sermon was in all its different branches so offensive to the Jews, that many of them who till now had been our Lord's disciples, finding by the general strain of it, that their ambitious, carnal views were to be utterly disappointed, they went out of the synagogue in a passion, and never came to hear him more.— 66. *From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him:* Jesus perceiving this defection to be very general, asked the twelve if they were going to leave him with the rest. 67. *Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?* 68. *Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.* In allusion to and acknowledgement of what Jesus had said concerning his flesh, verse 63. namely, that it was the bread of life, a truth which had stumbled the apostate disciples, but which Peter believed, because he

rightly



rightly understood it to signify the doctrine, word, or scheme of religion which Jesus taught in the flesh, and which alone can make a man happy here, and bring him to the possession of eternal life hereafter, the great end of all religion. This implicit faith in the whole of our Lord's doctrine, Peter rightly founded upon his faith in him as the Messiah. *Thou hast the words of eternal life.* 69. *And (nam, for) we believe, and are sure, that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.* 70. *Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?* The opinion of my character and mission which thou hast expressed in thine own name, and in the name of thy brethren, is just. However I am sensible that you are not all agreed in this confession. For one of you is *a devil*, i. e. so very bad a man, that he will betray me. It is true, I made choice of this very person equally with the rest, to be my apostle and companion. But from what I now tell you will happen, I hope you are convinced that I did not pitch upon so unworthy a person, through ignorance of his wicked disposition. I was intimately acquainted with the characters and dispositions of all of you, and in my choice of you, had it in view to make each of you assist me according to his qualities, whether good or bad, in carrying on the grand design I am come to execute. By this argument, therefore, you may likewise know that I am Messiah, the Son of the living God, and that your faith in me is well founded. 71. \* *He spake of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve:* he meant Judas Iscariot, though he did not at this time think fit to name him. To conclude, by declaring that he had knowingly made choice of a traitor to be one of the twelve who constantly attended him, he insinuated that in his most retired hours and secret actions, he was not afraid of the eyes of his enemies. Wherefore, having initiated a person of this character into all the mysteries of his fellowship, no man can suspect that he was carrying on a plot to deceive the world; for if he had, Judas, when he deserted him and betrayed him to the priests, would not have failed to discover the imposture.

\* Ver. 71. *He spake of Judas.]* He called Judas *a devil*, because he was to be an apostate and traitor. So likewise in rebuking Peter, who had expressed an utter aversion to his suffering at Jerusalem, he called him *Satan* on account of that one act, by which he opposed the great design of his coming into the world. Wherefore he might much more give Judas the name of *devil*, who resembled Satan so nearly in the wickedness of his dispositions and actions.

§ LXIII. *Jesus leaves Capernaum, and goes up to the passover.*  
 Mark vi. 54.

THE evangelist Mark, after having described the miracles performed by Jesus at Capernaum upon the sick, who were brought



to him in consequence of the messages which the inhabitants of the land of Gennezareth sent on his arrival from the desert of Bethsaida, into all the neighbouring region, proceeds to give the history of a multitude of miracles performed in other towns and villages. Mark vi. 56. *And whithersoever he entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might touch, if it were but the border of his garment: and as many as touched him were made whole.* It seems Jesus now made a long journey, in which he visited many different villages, cities, and countries. This could be no other than his journey to the passover, which the evangelist John says was nigh when the miracle of the loaves was performed, John vi. 4.

### THIRD PASSOVER.

That the third passover in our Lord's ministry happened about this time appears from what John tells us in his history of the miraculous dinner, chap. vi. 4. *And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.* According to Sir Isaac Newton's scheme of the harmony, this is the fourth passover in our Lord's ministry. And because John says, chap. vii. 1. *After these things, viz. the miracle of the loaves, and the conversation in the synagogue of Capernaum, Jesus walked in Galilee, for he would not walk in Jewry because the Jews sought to kill him,* Sir Isaac thinks he did not celebrate this passover at Jerusalem. And it must be owned, that the evangelists do not say expressly, that Jesus went up to it. Nevertheless, if we may judge of him from the religious regard which he constantly shewed to all the divine institutions, and from his behaviour on other occasions of a like nature, we may safely believe that he went, not only to this, but to all the feasts which the Jewish males were obliged by law to attend. Deut. xvi. 16. See also Numb. ix. 13. where he who was in a capacity, and did not keep the passover, is ordered to be cut off from his people. Besides, if I mistake not, Mark, as was mentioned above, insinuates that our Lord went to Jerusalem on this occasion; for his words which fall in here, may be considered as the history of that journey, vi. 56. *And whithersoever he entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might touch, if it were but the border of his garment: and as many as touched him were made whole.* See on John vi. § 45. This conjecture seems to be favoured by John likewise; for that evangelist having related what happened at Capernaum, in consequence of the miraculous dinner adds, chap. vii. 1. *After these things Jesus walked in Galilee, for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him.* This I suppose implies, that after the miraculous dinner Jesus had been in Jewry, where an attempt was made upon his life, which made it dangerous for him to continue there any longer at that time. But if any attempt was made upon our Lord's life in Jewry about this time, no scene was so fit for it as Jerusalem, no time so proper as the passover which happened during this period, and no actors so likely to be engaged in it as the Jews, the haughty priests, Pharisees and doctors, who were all assembled at the feast. Perhaps Christ's disciples also, who were offended by the sermon in the synagogue of Capernaum, had joined his enemies in the metropolis when they came up to the feast, and incensed them anew by rehearsing, with the usual aggravations of fame, the miracle of the loaves, performed to the conviction of every individual present. The commentators indeed have supposed, that in the passage quoted, John alludes to what happened at the preceding passover, on occasion of the cure of the infirm man who lay in

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one of the porticos of Bethesda. And in support of their opinion, they produce Christ's sermon at the feast of tabernacles, wherein he reprimanded the Jews for having attempted to kill him, because he had cured that infirm person on the Sabbath. They likewise produce the counsel which his brethren gave him before that feast, to shew himself in public, and the disputes of the Jews, occasioned by his not appearing there so soon as was expected. All which circumstances they think are more proper, on supposition that Jesus was not at the third passover. But to the first argument it may be replied, that it does not follow from the reprimand given to the Jews at the feast of tabernacles, that that was the first time Jesus had been in Jerusalem after performing the miracle on the man in Bethesda. The reprimand was proper then, even though it had been often given before. As for the second argument, it will no more prove that Jesus was absent from this feast, than it will prove that he was absent from all the precedent ones. And as for the argument drawn from the disputes of the Jews, if I am not mistaken, it establishes rather than overturns the opinion proposed, because these debates necessarily imply, that Jesus had attended every occasion of this kind hitherto. The reason is, if he had been absent from any of them, the Jews would not have disputed his character, but without other proof would have condemned him as an impious person, who despised the most sacred institutions of their religion. From these debates, therefore, we may fairly conclude, that Jesus went regularly every year to the three great festivals, though neither Matthew, nor Mark, nor Luke, have said directly that he was at any of them, excepting the passover at which he was crucified. See the second Preliminary Observation.

§ LXIV. *In Galilee, the Pharisees blame the disciples for eating with unwashed hands. Jesus reproves the Pharisees for their superstition. Matt. xv. 1,—20. Mark vii. 1,—23. John vii. 1.*

BECAUSE our Lord could not with safety remain long in Judea, he departed for Galilee as soon as the passover was ended. It seems the Pharisees had made another attempt upon his life at this passover. John vii. 1. *After these things Jesus walked in Galilee, for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews, the great men in Jerusalem, sought to kill him.* See on the third passover, § 63. This attempt proved equally unsuccessful with that made on his life at the second passover. Yet the Pharisees did not desist. They rather became more keen to have him destroyed. Accordingly they dispatched some of their number, inhabitants of Jerusalem, after him into Galilee, not to oppress him by violent methods, for in that country he was among his friends, but if possible to incense the people against him. Mark vii. 1. *Then came together unto him the Pharisees, and certain of the Scribes, which came from Jerusalem.* These emissaries, therefore, followed him from place to place, and looked on every thing he did with an evil eye; but to no purpose. At last they ventured to attack him, for allowing his disciples to transgress the tradition of the elders, by eating with unwashed hands, thinking that it was an heinous offence, and that he encouraged them in it. 2. *And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled (that is to say with unwashed) hands, they found fault.*



*fault.* The law of Moses required external cleanness as a part of religion, not however for its own sake, but to signify with what carefulness God's servants should purify their minds from moral pollutions. Accordingly these duties were prescribed by Moses in such moderation as was fitted to promote the end of them. But in process of time they came to be multiplied prodigiously. For the ancient doctors, to secure the observation of those precepts that were really of divine institution, added many commandments of their own as fences unto the former; and the people, to shew their zeal, obeyed them. For example, because the law, Lev. xv. 11. saith, "Whomsoever he toucheth that hath the issue, (and hath not rinsed his hands in water) he shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even," the people were ordered to wash their hands carefully, and to bathe themselves immediately on their return from places of public concourse, and before they sat down to meat, lest by touching some unclean person in the crowd, they might have defiled themselves. The Pharisees, therefore, being very zealous in these trifles, would eat at no time, *unless they washed their hands* with the greatest care; and when they came from the market-place, they would not sit down to table, till they had first *bathe themselves*. See the note on John ii. 6. § 19. From this source came that endless variety of purifications not prescribed in the law, but ordained by the elders, such as *the washing of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables*, not because they were dirty, but from a principle of religion, or rather of superstition. Mark vii. 3. *For the Pharisees and all the Jews, \* except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders.* 4. *And when they come from the market, except they wash* (Βαντισμοῖς, dip themselves) *they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups and pots, and of brazen vessels and tables.* Having the highest opinion of the importance of these institutions, the Pharisees did not doubt but our Lord, by authorising his disciples to neglect them, would expose himself to universal censure, as one who despised the most sacred services of religion; services to which

\* Ver. 3. *Except they wash their hands oft.*] οὐκ ἂν πυνον νύσονται, *except they washed with their fist.* Theophylact translates it, *unless they washed up to their elbow*, affirming that πυνον denotes the whole of the arm, from the bending to the ends of the fingers. But this sense of the word is altogether unusual. For πυνον properly is the hand, with the fingers contracted into the palm, and made round. Theophylact's translation, however, exhibits the evangelist's meaning. For the Jews, when they washed, held up their hands, and contracting their fingers, received the water that was poured on them by their servants, (who had it for a part of their office, 2 Kings iii. 11.) till it ran down their arms, which they washed up to their elbows. To *wash with the fist*, therefore, is to wash with great care.



which a sanction was given by the approbation and practice of the whole nation. Wherefore, while they pretended nothing but a sorrowful concern for the contempt which the disciples cast on institutions so sacred, their real intention was to make Jesus himself be detested by the people as a deceiver. Mark vii. 5. *Then the Pharisees and Scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, (see Antiq. Disc. i. chap. 2. § 3.) but eat bread with unwashen hands?* Hast thou taught them to despise these institutions?—The charge of impiety which the Pharisees thus brought against Jesus and his disciples, he easily retorted upon them with tenfold strength. Notwithstanding their pretended regard to the duties of piety, they were themselves guilty of the grossest violations of the divine law. Moreover, as they thus transgressed, not through ignorance, but knowingly, they were the worst of sinners, mere hypocrites, who deserved to be abhorred by all good men; and the rather, as God had long ago testified his displeasure against them in the prophecy which Isaiah had uttered concerning them. 6. *He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me* \*. This people talks much of religion, and makes a great shew of piety, but they have no regard for real goodness in their heart. However, all their worship is vain and displeasing to me, while they practise themselves, and impose upon others, as matters of divine appointment, a variety of frivolous precepts of mens invention, neglecting the eternal rules of righteousness. 7. *Howbeit, in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.* 8. *For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups; and many other such like things ye do:* the traditions which ye enjoin as the precepts of God, are really matters of human invention; for instance, your ordinances concerning the washing of pots and cups. Nevertheless, you make these trifles to be so essential in religion, and you exalt them to such a pitch, that in comparison you suffer the law of God to lie neglected and forgotten. What greater impiety or folly can there be than this?—But it was urged in favour of those traditions, that they were enjoined as fences of the divine law. Wherefore, in opposition to so specious a pretence, he affirmed, that the whole was mere hypocrisy, since they

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\* Matthew says our Lord made this citation from Isaiah at the end of his discourse. We may therefore suppose, that he cited and applied it twice; first at the beginning, as Mark tells us; and having proved that it was truly applicable to the Scribes and Pharisees, he applied it again at the conclusion of his argument, as Matthew affirms. We have several examples of the like repetitions in the gospels. Thus, Mark x. 7. compared with Matt. xix. 4 ;—Matt. xxiv. 5. compared with verses 11. 24. ;—Luke xxii. 18. compared with Matt. xxvi. 29.



did not scruple to break the most sacred rules of morality, which are also enjoined by God, and of unchangeable obligation, in order that they might observe their own tradition. 9. *And he said unto them, Full well (καλως, fairly, wholly. Or reading καλως separately, Finely done) ye reject the commandment of God, (Matt. Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your own tradition?) that ye may keep \* your own tradition.* But lest the charge which our Lord brought against the Pharisees might have been thought without foundation, because it contained an imputation of such gross profaneness, he supported it by an instance of an atrocious kind. God, saith he, has commanded (Exod. xx. 12.) “children to honour their parents,” that is, among other things, to † maintain them when reduced; promising life to such as do so, and threatening death against those that do otherwise. Nevertheless, ye presumptuously, making light of the divine commandment, affirm that it is a more sacred duty to enrich the temple, than to nourish one’s parents, though they be in the utmost necessity; pretending that what is offered to the great Parent, is better bestowed than that which is given for the support of our parents on earth; as if the interest of God was different from that of his creatures. Nay, ye impiously teach, that a man may lawfully suffer his parents to starve, if he can say to them, It is a gift by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; that is, it is given to the temple, which should have succoured you. Thus have ye hypocrites, by your frivolous traditions, made void the commandment of God, though of immutable and eternal obligation; and disguised with the cloke of piety the most horrid and unnatural action that a man can be guilty of. Mark vii. 10. *For Moses said, (Matt. God commanded, saying) Honour thy father and thy mother, and whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death.* 11. *But ye say, if a man (Matt. whosoever) shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, he shall be free.* 12. *And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother.* 13. *Making the word of God of none effect, through your tradition which ye have delivered. And many such like things do ye.* Matt. xv. 8. *Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophecy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.* 9. *But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.* Having thus spoken, Jesus called the multitude, and said unto them, *Hear how*

\* Ver. 9. *Your own tradition.*] The words *your own* are emphatical, distinguishing the commandments of men, the corrupt traditions of the Pharisees, from the commandments of God, which may also be called traditions. See 1 Cor. xi. 2. 2 Thess. ii. 15.

† Maintain them] Thus the word *honour* signifies maintenance, 1 Tim. v. 17.



how absurd the precepts are which the scribes inculcate upon you, and understand the true differences of things. These hypocrites, anxious about trifles, neglect the great duties of morality, which are of unchangeable obligation. They shudder with horror at hands unwashed, but are perfectly easy under the guilt of impure minds, although not that which goeth into the mouth rendereth a man impure in the sight of God, but that which cometh out of the mouth; because in the sight of God cleanness and uncleanness are qualities, not of the body, but of the mind, which can be polluted by nothing but sin. 14. *And when he had called all the people unto him, he said unto them, Harken unto me every one of you, and understand.* 15. *There is nothing from without a man that entering into him (Matt. goeth into the mouth) can defile him; but the things which come out of him (Matt. out of the mouth) those are they that defile the man.* 16. *If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.* Our Lord did not at all mean to overthrow the distinction which the law had established between things clean and unclean, in the matter of man's food. That distinction, like all the other emblematical institutions of Moses, was wisely appointed; being designed to teach the Israelites how carefully the familiar company and conversation of the wicked is to be avoided. He only affirmed, that in itself no kind of meat can defile the mind which is the man, though by accident it may; for instance, when taken in quantity or kind contrary to the commandment of God.

The apostles, who it seems would gladly have conciliated the good will of the Pharisees, thinking it might be of service to their cause, were sorry to find their Master had disobliged them by speaking in disparagement of their traditions. Wherefore, when the Pharisees were gone, they drew near, and insinuated that he was to blame in so doing. Matt. xv. 12. *Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended after they heard this saying?* 13. *But he answered and said, Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up:* Be they as angry as they will, ye need not be afraid of them, for they and their doctrine shall perish together, being neither of them from God. Matt. xv. 14. *Let them alone; they be blind leaders of the blind:* teachers who foolishly think to lead their disciples to perfection, by the observation of precepts wherein there is not the smallest degree of true piety, and will not be convinced of the contrary; for which cause, both the guides and the guided, who prefer ignorance to knowledge, and superstition to true religion, shall fall into the ditch of eternal perdition. *And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.* But the disciples, not understanding their Master's doctrine concerning meats, desired him, when they were come home, to explain it. He complied, and shewed them,

that



that meats being of a corporeal nature cannot defile the mind, or make a man a sinner in the sight of God, unless when used immoderately, or in opposition to the commandment of God; in which case the pollution arises from the man, and not from the meat. Mark vii. 17. *And when he was entered into the house from the people, his disciples (Matt. Peter) asked him concerning the parable (Matt. Declare unto us this parable).* 18. *And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive (Matt. understand) that whatsoever thing from without entereth (Matt. in at the mouth) into the man, it cannot defile him? Are ye so stupid as not to see, that what a man eats or drinks cannot defile him in the sight of God:—19. Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, (εἰς τὸν ἀφίδνα) purging all meats: being of a corporeal nature, it cannot enter into the mind, and consequently cannot pollute the soul. Whereas that which proceedeth out of a man's mouth, coming from his heart, really pollutes his mind.* 20. *And he said, that which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man, (Matt. But those things which proceed out of the mouth, come forth from the heart, and they defile the man).* 21. *For from within, out of the heart of men proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,* 22. *Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, \* foolishness.* 23. *All these evil things † come from within, and defile the man.* Matt. xv. 20. *These are the things which defile a man; but to eat with unwashed hands, defileth not a man* Thus our Lord defended his disciples by a beautiful chain of reasoning, wherein he has shewed the true nature of actions, and loaded with perpetual infamy the Jewish teachers and their brood, who in every age and country may be known by features exactly resembling their parents, the main strokes of which are, that by their

\* Ver. 22. *Foolishness.*] Ἀφροσύνη, foolish ungovernable passion. in opposition to σοφία, as the critics observe. It is remarkable, that three of the crimes here mentioned, as pollutions of the mind, viz. murder, false witness, and blasphemy, were on this very occasion committed by the persons who charged our Lord with impiety, because he neglected such ceremonial precepts of religion as were of human invention. For whilst they feigned the highest reverence for the divine law, they were making void its most essential precepts. At the very time that they condemned the disciples for so small an offence as eating with unwashed hands, contrary only to the traditions of the elders, the Scribes and Pharisees were murdering Jesus by their calumnies and false witnessings. notwithstanding it was the only study of his life to do them all the good possible.

† Ver. 23. *Come from within.*] Matthew, ver. 18. represents these evil things as proceeding out of the mouth, not so much by way of contrast to meats, which enter by the mouth into a man, as because some of them are committed with the faculty of speech, such as false witness and blasphemy; and others of them are helped forward by its assistance, namely, adultery, deceit, &c.



their frivolous superstitions they weaken, and sometimes destroy the eternal and immutable rules of righteousness.

{ LXV. *Jesus in the country of Tyre and Sidon cures a Canaanitish woman's daughter, who was vexed with a devil.* *Matth. xv. 21,—28. Mark vii. 24,—30.*

It may easily be believed, that the Pharisees were highly offended at the liberty which Jesus took in the preceding discourse, for he had plucked off from them the mask wherewith they covered their ugliness, and rendered themselves so venerable in the eyes of the vulgar. Accordingly, their plots being levelled against his reputation and life, he judged it proper to retire with his disciples into the remote region, which lay between the cities of Tyre and Sidon \*, proposing to conceal himself a while.

Mark

\* Sidon was a very ancient city, having been built by Sidon the eldest son of Chanaan, the son of Ham, the son of Noah. The patriarch Jacob mentions it, Gen. xlix. 13. In the days of Joshua, it was a large city, for ch. xix. 28. it is called Great Zidon. Its inhabitants were the first remarkable merchants in the world, and were very early noted for their luxury. For in the days of the Judges, the inhabitants of Laish are said to have *dwelt careless and secure, after the manner of the Sidonians*, Judges xviii. 3. Strabo, the Greek geographer, tells us, that the poets have celebrated Sidon more than Tyre, and that Homer hath not mentioned Tyre, though he speaks of Sidon and the Sidonians in several places, Strab. lib. 16. Tyre was built by a colony from Sidon. For Isaiah says to her, ch. xxiii. 1. *Tyon, whom the merchants of Zidon that pass over the sea, have plenished,* Hence, ver. 12. he calls Tyre *the daughter of Zidon*. The antiquity of Tyre may be learned from Isaiah xxiii. 7. *Is this your joyous city whose antiquity is of ancient days?* Even in Joshua's time it was strongly fortified. For it is called (Josh xix. 29.) *the strong city Tyre*. Justin, the epitomizer of Trogus, tells us, that the Sidonians being besieged by the king of Ascalon, went in ships and built Tyre, lib. xviii. cap. 3. § 5. In process of time, Tyre excelled Sidon, and became the most celebrated place in the world for its trade and navigation, being the seat of commerce, and the center of riches. Hence it is called (Isa. xxiii. 3.) *a mart of nations*, and (ver. 6.) *the crowning city, whose merchants are princes, whose traffickers are the honourable of the earth*. An idea of the trade and luxury of Tyre may be formed by reading Ezek xxvii. The account which Justin gives from Trogus of the peopling of Tyre, implies, that the insular Tyre was built before Tyre on the continent. Accordingly, Isaiah who wrote many years before Nebuchadnezzar besieged Tyre on the continent, and by so doing, occasioned, as is supposed, the building of the insular Tyre, in his prophecy of the destruction of Tyre, calls the Tyrians twice *inhabitants of the isle*, xxiii. 2. 6. and the city itself *the sea and the strength of the sea*, ver. 4. 11. Mr Maundrell describes the present state of Tyre as follows, *Travels*, pag. 48.—“This city standing in the sea upon a peninsula, promises at a distance something very magnificent. But when you come to it, you find no similitude of that glory for which it was so renowned in ancient times, and which the prophet Ezekiel describes chapters xxvi. xxvii. xxviii. On the north it has an old Turkish castle, besides which you see nothing here but a mere babel of broken walls, pillars, vaults. &c. there being not so much as one entire house left. Its present inhabitants are only a few poor wretches, harbouring themselves in the vaults, and subsisting



Mark vii. 24. *And from thence he arose and went into the borders* (*ἡ τὰ μείζω, the parts which bordered upon Galilee, Matt. τὰ μίση, the parts, the country*) *of Tyre and Sidon, 25. And entered into an house, and would have no man know it (him); but he could not be hid.* It seems he was personally known to many of the heathens in this country, who no doubt had often heard and seen him in Galilee, (see on Mark iii. 8. § 47.) And as for the rest, they were sufficiently acquainted with him by his fame, which had spread itself very early through all Syria, (see on Matt. iv. 24. § 25.) In one of the towns of this remote country, there lived a Canaanitish woman whose daughter was possessed with a devil, and who for that reason received the news of his arrival with great joy. *For a certain woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him. This person was a descendent of the ancient inhabitants, and \* by religion a heathen.* So Mark informs us afterwards, verse 26. She was therefore ignorant of the true religion. Nevertheless, she had conceived a very great, and honourable, and just opinion, not only of our Lord's power and goodness, but even of his character as Messiah, which she had learned the notion of, by conversing with the Jews. For when she heard of his arrival, she went in quest of him, and meeting him accidentally as he passed along the street, she addressed him by the title of *Son of David*, and cried after him for a cure to her daughter. Matt. xv. 22. *And behold a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David,*

living chiefly upon fishing, who seem to be preserved in this place by divine Providence, as a visible argument how God has fulfilled his word concerning Tyre, viz. *that it should be as the top of a rock, a place for fishers to dry their nets on.*"

It appears from Joshua xxii. 9. that the whole country westward of Jordan was called Canaan, that on the east being named Gilead. From the same book, ch. xix. 28. 29. we learn, that Tyre and Sidon were cities in the lot of Asher; which tribe having never been able wholly to drive out the natives, their posterity remained even in our Lord's time. Hence he did not preach the doctrine of the kingdom in this country, because it was mostly inhabited by heathens to whom he was not sent, (see on Matt. x. 5. § 40. p. 181.) neither did he work miracles here with that readiness which he shewed every where else. The reason was, he proposed by concealing himself to shun the Pharisees.

\* By religion a heathen.] I think this plain from Mark, who calls her *a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation.* For since the woman's nation is mentioned in the latter clause, the title of *a Greek* that is given her in the former, must certainly be the denomination of her religion. Keuchenius thinks, that the epithet *ἡ ἑλληνίστις* denotes the woman's occupation, she merchandized, and supports his notion by the like use of the word in the Old Testament. But his conjecture will not hold, because our Lord's reply to her, *It is not meet to give the childrens bread to dogs*, plainly imports, that she was a heathen. I think this evident likewise from what he said to the disciples, verse 24. *I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*



*David, my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. 23. But he answered her not a word: he did not seem to regard her, intending that the greatness of her faith should be made to appear, an end highly worthy of the wisdom of Jesus, because it not only shewed how great the fame of his miracles now was, on which the woman's faith was built, and justified his conduct in working a miracle for an heathen, but it was a sharp rebuke to the Jews for their infidelity. In the mean time, his disciples being ignorant of his design, were uneasy at the woman's importunity, thinking, if she was permitted to follow them, they would soon be discovered. Desiring therefore to get rid of her, they intreated their Master to dismiss her, And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away, for she crieth after us. 24. But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel: though I am come to save all the nations of the world, my ministry must be confined to the Israelites, (see on Matth. x. 5. § 40.) Thus at the first, Jesus seemed to refuse both the woman's request, and the disciples' intercession in her behalf. She however, far from being discouraged by the repulse, drew near, and falling on her knees before him, urged her petition with much earnestness. 25. Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. Mark expresses the matter thus, And came and fell at his feet. 26. (The woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation) and she besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter. Matt. xv. 26. But he answered and said, (Mark, unto her, Let the children first be filled, For) It is not meet to take the childrens bread, and to cast it to (Mark, the) dogs. The Jews gloried greatly in the honourable title of God's children, because of all nations they alone knew and worshipped the true God. They gave the name of dogs unto the heathens, for their idolatry and other pollutions, by which they had degraded themselves from the rank of reasonable creatures. This appellation therefore marked the impurity of the Gentiles, and their odiousness in the sight of God. At the same time, conveying an idea of the contempt in which they were held by the holy nation, though in some respects it was applicable, it must have been very offensive to the heathens. Nevertheless this good woman neither refused it, nor grudged the Jews the honourable title of children. She acknowledged the justness of what Christ said, and by a strong exercise of faith drew an argument from it, which the candour and benevolence of his disposition could not resist. Matt. xv. 27. And she said, Truth, Lord, yet the dogs (Mark, under the table) eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table: (Mark, eat of the childrens crumbs) let me have such kindness as the dogs of any family enjoy. From the plenty of miraculous cures which thou bestowest on the Jews, drop the offal of this one to me, who am a poor distressed*



pressed heathen ; for by it they will suffer no greater loss, than the children of a family do by the crumbs which are cast to the dogs. Jesus having thus made it evident, that the woman possessed a very high degree of faith, a just notion of his power and goodness, and of her own unworthiness, wrought with pleasure the cure which she solicited in behalf of her daughter, and at the same time gave her faith the praise that was due to it. 28. *Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith ; be it unto thee even as thou wilt.* Mark vii. 29. *And he said unto her, For this saying, go thy way, the devil is gone out of thy daughter.* As soon as she had uttered the sentiment that was so acceptable to Christ, he had willed the ejection of the demon. And though scarce any time passed between her uttering that sentiment and his answer, so great was his power and goodness, that the devil was expelled before he spake ; *go thy way, the devil is gone out.* Matth. *And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.* Mark vii. 30. *And when she was come to her house, she found the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed.*

The success which this Canaanitish woman's suit met with from Jesus, teaches us two lessons of great importance : First, That God is no respecter of persons, but always accepts sincere faith and fervent prayer, proceeding from an humble penitent heart. Secondly, That it is our duty to continue in prayer with earnestness, although the answer thereof should be long deferred.

§ LXVI. *In Decapolis Jesus cures one who was deaf, and who had an impediment in his speech.* Mark vii. 31,—37.

At length Jesus departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, returned to the sea of Galilee through the region of Decapolis, on the east side of Jordan. Mark vii. 31. *And again departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he came unto the sea of Galilee through the mids of the coasts of Decapolis.* Somewhere in this country, they brought to him a man who was deaf, and who had an impediment in his speech. 32. *And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech, μουλωλον :* He was not absolutely dumb, but stammered to such a degree, that few understood his speech (ver. 35.) However the circumstance of his being able to speak in any manner, shews that his deafness was not natural but accidental. He had heard formerly, and had learned to speak, but was now deprived of hearing, perhaps through some fault of his own, which was the reason that Jesus sighed for grief when he cured him. *And they beseech him to put his hand upon him.* His friends interceded for him, because he was not able to speak for himself, so as any one could understand him. His desire however of a cure, may have prompted him to do his utmost in speaking, whereby all present were made



made sensible of the greatness of the infirmity under which he laboured. Our Lord's exuberant goodness easily prompted him to give this person the relief which his friends begged for him. Yet he would not do it publicly, lest the admiration of the spectators should have been raised so high as to produce bad effects; for the whole country was now following him, in expectation that he would soon set up his kingdom. Or as Gadara, where his miracle upon the demoniacs had been so ill received, was part of this region, (see on Luke viii. 26. § 32.) he might shun performing the miracle publicly, because it would have no effect upon so stupid a people. Whatever was the reason, he took the man with his relations aside from the crowd, and because the deaf are supposed to have their ears shut, and the dumb their tongue so tied or fastened to the under part of their mouth, as not to be able to move it, (see ver. 35.) he put his fingers into the man's ears, and then touched or moistened his tongue with his spittle, to make him understand that he intended to open his ears, and loose his tongue. 33. *And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit and touched his tongue.* 34. *And that the deaf man, whom he could not instruct by language, might consider from whence all benefits proceed, looking up to heaven, \* he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, be opened.* 35. *And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain.* 36. *And he charged them that they should tell no man.* When Jesus formerly cured the demoniac in this country, he ordered him, Luke viii. 39. "saying, Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee." At this miracle the deaf and dumb man's relations seem to have been present. Wherefore, as they had no need to be informed of the miracle, he required that it should be concealed; and the rather, that the publishing of it might have prompted the multitude to raise tumults. See on Matt. viii. 4. § 37. However, neither the man nor his friends obeyed Jesus in this; especially the man, who having the use of his speech given him, was very fond of exercising it in praise of so great a benefactor. Accordingly he published the miracle every where, and the more that Jesus was not desirous of glory: *but the more he charged him, so much the more a great deal they published it,—37. And were beyond mea-*

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\* Ver. 34. *He sighed.*] Perhaps there were the circumstances above mentioned, on ver. 32. or some others to us unknown, which made this dumb person a peculiar object of pity. Or by this example of bodily deafness and dumbness, our Lord might be led to reflect on the spiritual deafness and dumbness of men. But whatever was the cause, Christ's sighing on this occasion, evidently displayed the tender love he bare to our kind. For certainly it could be nothing less which moved him to condole our miseries, whether general or particular, in so affectionate a manner. See many instances of his compassion, Luke xix. 41. John xi. 33.



*sure astonished at the greatness of the miracle, (see on Matt. xv. 30. § 67.) and at the modesty of him who had performed it, saying, He hath done all things well; hath fully executed what he took in hand: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak; and in doing this he has no view but the benefit of mankind.*

§ LXVII. *The second miraculous dinner is given to eight thousand people on a mountain near the sea of Galilee. (see § 60.) After this Jesus goes away to Dalmanutha. Matt. xv. 29,—39. Mark viii. 1,—10.*

JESUS having tarried in Decapolis a considerable time, the fame of his being in that country reached every corner. Wherefore, to avoid the crowds, he retired into a desert mountain beside the sea of Galilee. Matt. xv. 29. *And Jesus departed from thence, and came nigh unto the sea of Galilee, (ἤλθεν παρὰ τὴν Δαλμανούθου τῆς Γαλιλαίας) and went up into a mountain, and sat down there.* Here the sick, the lame, the dumb, the blind, and the maimed, were brought to him from all quarters, and laid down around him by their friends, who followed him thither. 30. *And great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, many other sorts of sick persons, and cast them down at Jesus feet. And he healed them.* The sight of so many people in distress, moved the compassion of the Son of God exceedingly, for he graciously healed them all. Particularly on the dumb, who are commonly deaf also, he not only conferred the faculty of hearing and pronouncing articulate sounds, but he conveyed into their mind at once the whole language of their country, making them perfectly acquainted with all the words in it, their significations, their forms, their powers, and their uses, so as to comprehend the whole distinctly in their memories, and, at the same time, he gave them the habit of speaking it, both fluently and copiously. This was a kind of miracle vastly astonishing. The change that was produced in the bodies of the men, was but the least part of it. What passed in their minds was the grand and principal thing, being an effect so extensive, that nothing inferior to infinite power could produce it. With respect to the maimed, that is, persons who had lost their legs and arms, Jesus gave them new members in their stead. But when he thus created such parts of their bodies as were wanting, without having any thing at all as a subject to work upon, the spectators could not have been more surprised, had they seen him make a whole human body out of the dust of the earth. The Jewish multitude seem to have apprehended the greatness of these miracles, more distinctly than the generality of Christians; for we are told, Matt. ix. 33. when Jesus opened the mouth of a dumb man, the multitude marvelled, “saying,



"saying, It was never so seen in Israel." See also Matt. xii. 22, 23. Mark vii. 38. On this occasion likewise they were not silent nor unaffected. 31. *Inasmuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel.* This latter clause makes it probable, that many heathens were now present with our Lord, beheld his miracles, and formed a just notion of them. It seems his fame spreading itself into the neighbouring countries, had made such an impression even upon the idolatrous nations, that numbers of them came from far, to hear and see the wonderful man of whom such things were reported, and if possible to experience his healing goodness. Wherefore, when they beheld those effects of his power, they were exceedingly struck with them, and brake forth in praises of the God by whose assistance and authority he acted. And it may be also, from that time forth devoted themselves to his worship. *They glorified the God of Israel.*

The multitude above mentioned continued at this time with Jesus three days. So Mark accidentally informs us; but he speaks nothing of the transactions which happened on them. Of these Matthew has given a general account on the passage just now explained. And now the multitude having, as on a former occasion, consumed all the provision they brought with them, Jesus would not send them away without feeding them, lest they might have fainted on the road home, many of them having come from far. Mark viii. 1. *In those days the multitude being very great, and having nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples unto him, and saith unto them, 2. I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat. 3. And if I send them away fasting to their own houses, they will faint by the way; for divers of them came from far.* The disciples, who it seems were not thinking now of the former miraculous dinner, imagined that Jesus proposed to feed this great multitude in the natural way, and were greatly surprised at it. 4. *And his disciples answered him, From whence can a man satisfy these men (Matt. fill so great a multitude) with bread, here in the wilderness?* They did not reflect, it seems, upon the former miraculous dinner which Jesus had given to the multitude, or if they did, they had such imperfect conceptions of his power, that they fancied he could not feed the multitude a second time. For these wrong notions Jesus did not reprove them, but meekly asked what meat they had; and upon their telling him that they had seven loaves and a few little fishes, he ordered them to be brought, and out of these made a second dinner for the multitude by miracle; few or none of them having been present at the former dinner. They seem to have been mostly such as followed Jesus from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, and the neighbouring heathen



heathen country. Hence they are said, on seeing his miracles, to have glorified the God of Israel. This dinner was in all respects like to the first, except in the number of loaves and fishes of which it was made, the number of persons who were present at it, and the number of baskets that were filled with the fragments that remained. The loaves made use of at this feast were seven, the fishes are said to have been little and few, the baskets of fragments that remained were seven, and the people who were fed were four thousand men, besides women and children, who no doubt were equal in number to, if not more than the men. At this dinner the multitude was ordered to sit down, not on the grass as at the former, but on the ground, the grass being gone. Hence it may be conjectured, that the miracle was performed about the middle of summer, the grass in Judea decaying very early through the excessive heat of the climate. (See Antiq. Disc. vi.) The weather therefore being good, and the air warm, the people could remain two or three nights successively in the fields \*. Mark viii. 5. *And he asked, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven. (Matt. and a few little fishes.)* 6 *And he commanded the people (Matt. the multitude) to sit down on the ground; and he took the seven loaves, (Matt. and the fishes) and gave thanks, and brake, and gave to his disciples to set before them; and they did set them before the people.* 7. *And they had a few small fishes; and he blessed, and commanded to set them also before them.* He gave thanks for the fishes separately, and distributed them separately. The evangelists having, in the history of the former dinner, described the manner in which the multitude was set down, thought it needless on this occasion to say any thing of that particular, probably because they were ranged as before, in companies, by hundreds and by fifties. 8. *So they did eat, (Matt. they did all eat) and were filled: and they took up of the broken meat that was left, seven baskets, (Matt. full).* 9. *And they that had eaten were about four thousand (Matt. men, beside*

\* One cannot but remark with what wisdom Jesus chose to be so much in deserts, during this period of his ministry. He was resolved, in the discharge of the duties of it, to make as little noise as possible, to avoid crowds, and to be followed only by such as had dispositions proper for profiting by his instructions. And to say the truth, not a great many others would accompany him into solitudes, where they were to sustain the inconveniences of hunger and the weather, for several days together. As the multitude, on this and the like occasions, remained long with Jesus, doubtless his doctrine distilled upon them all the while like the dew, and as the small rain upon the tender herb. If so, what satisfaction and edification should we find in the divine discourses which he then delivered, were we in possession of them! The refreshment we receive from such of them as the inspired writers have preserved, raises an ardent desire of the rest. At the same time it must be acknowledged, that we are blessed with as much of Christ's doctrine as is fully sufficient to all the purposes of our salvation.



*beside women and children*). Matthew tells us, that having fed the multitude, Jesus took boat, and passed over to the coasts of Magdala, in quest of more opportunities to instruct and heal mankind. Matt. xv. 39. *And he sent away the multitude, and took ship, (Mark, with his disciples) and came into the coasts of Magdala.* Mark says, *he came into the parts of Dalmanutha.* But the evangelists may easily be reconciled, by supposing that Dalmanutha was a city and territory within the district of Magdala. Reland, Palest. pag. 884. mentions a castle called Magdala, not far from Gamaba, which he thinks gave this region its name.

§ LXVIII. *In Dalmanutha the Pharisees demand the sign from heaven the second time, see § 48. 86. The sign of the prophet Jonab promised the second time, see § 48. 86. Jesus leaves Dalmanutha. In sailing across the lake, he cautions his disciples to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Matt. xvi. 1,—12. Mark viii. 11,—21.*

WHILE Jesus was in Dalmanutha or Magdala, the Pharisees having heard of the second miraculous dinner, and fearing that the whole common people would acknowledge him for the Messiah, resolved to confute his pretensions fully and publicly. For this purpose, they came forth with the Sadducees, who though the opposites and rivals of the Pharisees in all other matters, joined them in their design of oppressing Jesus, and along with them demanded of him the sign from heaven. It seems the Jews understanding the prophecy, Dan. vii. 13. literally, expected that Messiah would make his first public appearance in the clouds of heaven, and take unto himself glory and a temporal kingdom, see on Matt. iv. 6. § 17. Agreeably to this, Josephus describing the state of affairs in Judea under Felix, tells us that the deceivers and impostors pretending to inspiration, endeavoured to bring about changes, and so making the people mad, led them into the wilderness, as if they had been to shew them signs of liberty, Bell. lib. ii. cap. 12. Wherefore, when the Pharisees desired Jesus to shew them a sign from heaven, they certainly meant that he should demonstrate himself to be the Messiah, by coming in a visible and miraculous manner from heaven with great pomp, and by wresting the kingdom out of the hands of the Romans. These hypocrites craftily feigned an inclination to believe, if he would but give them sufficient evidence of his mission. However their true design was, that by his failing in the proof which they required, he should expose himself to general blame. Mark viii. 11. *And the Pharisees came forth, (Matth. with the Sadducees) and began to question, (Gr. to dispute) with him, seeking of him a sign from heaven, tempting him.* The proofs which Jesus was daily giving them of his mission being more than sufficient to establish it, had the Pharisees been possessed of any candour at all,



or any inclination to know the truth, they could not have been at a loss to judge in this matter, especially as in the ordinary affairs of life they shewed abundance of acuteness. The truth is, their not acknowledging our Lord as Messiah, was owing neither to want of evidence, nor to want of capacity to judge of that evidence. This Jesus signified in the reproof which he gave them, for discerning so accurately by the face of the earth and sky, what sort of weather would be, whilst they were so stupid as not to understand by the accomplishment of the ancient prophecies, (Gen. xlix. 10. Isa. xi. 1. xxxv. 5. Dan. ix. 24.) and by the miracles which he performed, that the time foretold by the prophets and expected by all ages, even the time of the Messiah, was come. Matt. xvi. 2. *He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather, for the sky is red. 3. And in the morning, it will be foul weather to-day, for the sky is red and lowering.* (See on Luke xii. 56. § 89.) *O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky, but can ye not discern the signs of the times?* The Pharisees being more expert in forming a judgment of the weather, than in discerning the signs of the times, it plainly appeared that their thoughts were much more employed about matters relative to the present life, than to the future; wherefore, our Lord's reproof was well founded, and no more severe than the nature of their folly deserved. Withal, having a disposition absolutely incorrigible, the Saviour of the world felt the bitterest grief on their account, sighed deeply in his spirit, and solemnly declared that the sign they were seeking should not be given them. They were to have no sign but that of the prophet Jonas, or the miracle of his own resurrection, a sign greater than any of those shewed by the ancient prophets and messengers of God, and consequently a sign which proved Jesus to be superior unto them all. Mark viii. 12. *And he sighed deeply in his spirit* (see on Luke i. 47. § 4. Luke x. 21. § 81.) *and saith, -Why doth this generation seek after a sign, viz. from heaven?* (Mat. *a wicked and an adulterous generation seeketh after a sign.* See on Mark viii. 38. § 71.) \* *Verily I say unto you, There shall no sign be given to this generation* (Matt. xvi. 4.) *but the sign of the prophet Jonas.* The sign of the prophet Jonas

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\* Ver. 12. *Verily I say unto you, &c.*] Ἀμὲν λέγω ὑμῖν, ὡς δαδουῖται τῇ γενεῇ ταύτῃ σημεῖον, *Verily I say unto you, I am not alive if a sign, viz. from heaven, shall be given to this generation.* That ὡς δαδουῖται is an elliptical form of an oath, is evident from Heb. iii. 11. In ordinary cases, it may be supplied out of the ancient forms of swearing, thus, *God do so to me, and more also, if a sign shall be given.* But in the mouth of God, such an oath must be supplied thus: *Let me not be true, if they shall enter into my rest; if a sign shall be given, &c.* Or as in Ezek. xiv. 16. Ἐγὼ οὐκ ἔμνημι, ὡς οὐκ ἔμνημι ζῶντες, *I live not if sons or daughters be delivered.*



our Lord had explained on a former occasion. See on Matt. xii. 40. *And he left them and departed.*

When Jesus left the Pharisees, he went with his disciples into the boat. Mark viii. 13. *And he left them, and entering into the ship again, departed to the other side.* 14. *Now the disciples had forgotten to take bread, neither had they in the ship with them more than one loaf.* (Matt. *And when his disciples were come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread.*) It seems they tarried so long in Dalmanutha, that they had consumed the seven baskets of fragments which they had taken up at the late miraculous dinner. Mark viii. 15. *And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod,* (Matt. *of the Sadducees.* See Jewish Ant. Disc. i. c. 4. § 1.) \* While they sailed to the other side, Jesus bade his disciples beware of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees, which he called leaven, because of its pernicious influence to sour mens tempers with pride and other evil passions. For as those hypocrites chiefly enjoined the observation of frivolous traditions, their doctrine was a great enemy to the principles of true piety, and puffed men up with an high conceit of their own sanctity. But the disciples having accidentally forgotten to take bread into the boat with them, and having often heard the doctors prohibit the use of the leaven of heathens and Samaritans, they thought he forbade them to buy bread from bakers of either sect, lest it might be made with leaven some how impure; and so looked on the advice as an indirect reproof of their carelessness. 16 *And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have* (Matt. *have taken*) *no bread:* They talked privately among themselves about the meaning of their Master's exhortation, and agreed that it was a reproof for their neglecting to take bread along with them. 17. *And when Jesus knew it, he saith unto them* (Matt. *O ye of little faith*) *Why reason ye because ye have no bread? Why should your neglecting to bring bread with you, make you put such an interpretation upon my words? Perceive ye not yet, neither understand?* After having been so long with me, are ye still ignorant of my power and goodness? *Have ye your heart yet hardened?* Is there no abiding impression made yet

\* While they sailed.] Matthew's account indeed seems to contradict this supposition, xvi. 5. *And when his disciples were come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread.* But if that was the evangelist's meaning, the interpretation which the disciples put upon their Master's reproof must have been improper; because they might easily have supplied themselves with bread in the country to which they were come. In the original the words are, *καὶ ἰδού, αἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ ἔρχονται πρὸς τὴν ἄλλην ἡμερὰν, καὶ ἐλάλησαν αὐτῷ λέγοντες.* The proper translation of which is, *Now the disciples going to the other side, had forgotten to take bread.* That ἰδού signifies *to go* as well as *to come*, see proved in the note on Matt. xvi. 28. § 71. Besides, it is more agreeable to the nature of the thing to suppose that this conversation happened as they sailed,



yet upon your minds, by the many and great miracles I have performed? 18. *Having eyes, see ye not? having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember?* My miracles being all the objects of sense, no extraordinary degree of capacity was requisite to enable you to judge of them. How came it then, that possessing your senses of seeing and hearing entire, you were not struck with the miracle of the loaves so as to remember it? 19. *When I brake the five loaves among five thousand, How many baskets full of fragments took ye up?* Certainly you are very stupid if you have forgotten how that with five loaves I fed five thousand men, who after being fully satisfied, left a great deal more than the quantity that was at first set before me to divide among them. Without doubt you remember how many baskets full of the broken pieces of meat you took up on that occasion. *They say unto him, Twelve.* 20. *And when the seven among four thousand, How many baskets full of fragments took ye up? and they said, Seven.* 21. *And he said unto them, How is it that ye do not understand?* How come ye not to know, that he who on those different occasions fed such multitudes of people with a quantity of food next to nothing, can never be at a loss to provide a meal for twelve? and by consequence, Matth. xvi. 11. *That I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees?* The instances of our Lord's power, which he now mentioned, having happened lately, especially the second miraculous dinner, the disciples were so much the more to blame, for their gross inattention and stupidity. They deserved therefore the sharp rebuke which their Master gave them on this occasion. His reproof had the designed effect; for it brought the disciples to understand that their Master designed to caution them against the corrupt doctrines of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Matth. xvi. 12. *Then understood they, how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, the leaven with which bread is made, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees,* the pernicious nature of whose opinions may be learned from many instances taken notice of and condemned by Jesus himself in the course of his ministry. See his sermon on the mount, § 26.

§ LXIX. *Jesus lands at Bethsaida, and gives sight to a blind man near that town.* Mark viii. 22,—26.

HAVING crossed the lake, Jesus landed at Bethsaida, or went thither very soon. For in the next passage of the history, we find him curing a blind man who was brought to him there. Mark viii. 22. *And he cometh to Bethsaida, and they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him.* 23. *And he took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the town, proposing to perform this miracle in private; and when he had spit*



on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, to make him sensible by action, that the miracle was to happen by his volition, he asked him if he saw aught. 24. And he looked up and said, I see men as trees, walking. 25. After that he put his hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up; and he was restored, and saw every man clearly. 26. And he sent him away to his house, saying, Neither go into the town, nor tell it to any in the town. Two things are remarkable in this miracle: 1. Our Lord led the man out of the city before he would heal him; and when the cure was performed, he forbade him to return thither, or so much as to tell it unto any who lived in the town. The reason was, the people had of a long time been solicitous to have him acknowledged as the Messiah, and every new miracle which they beheld, moved them afresh to make the attempt. Nor could the inhabitants of Bethsaida complain of being ill used, though they were not permitted to be witnesses of the cure, since they had brought this mark of Christ's displeasure upon themselves, by their ingratitude, impenitence, and infidelity, Matt. xi. 21. And as for the man, he could not think it any hardship to be hindered from returning into the city, since it was not the place of his abode, ver. 26. 2. In giving sight to this blind man, Jesus did not, as on other occasions of a like nature, impart the faculty all at once, but by degrees. For at the first, the man saw things but obscurely; then by a second imposition of Christ's hands, he had a clear sight of every object in view. Our Lord's intention in this might be, to make it evident that in his cures he was not confined to one method of operation, but could dispense them in what manner he pleased. In the mean time, though the cure was performed by degrees, it was accomplished in so small a space of time, as to make it evident that it was not produced by any natural efficacy of our Lord's spittle or touch, but merely by the exertion of his miraculous power. The blind man's expression, after the first imposition of Christ's hands, may easily be accounted for, on supposition that he was not born blind, but had lost his sight by some accident; for if that was the case, he might have retained the idea both of men and trees. In which light his words, "I see men as trees walking," express the indistinctness of his vision very properly.

§ LXX. *Jesus makes a tour by land, and goes into the country of Caesarea Philippi. He bestows on Peter the power of the keys, and foretells his own suffering and resurrection a second time. See § 20. 72. Matthew xvi. 13,—23. Mark viii. 27,—33. Luke ix. 18,—22.*

FROM Bethsaida Jesus went north into the territory of Caesarea Philippi. Here he asked his disciples, what the people's opinion of him was. Mark viii. 27. *And Jesus went out, and his disci-*



ples, into the towns of \* *Cæsarea Philippi*. Matt. xvi. 13. *When Jesus came into the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi*, (Mark, *And by the way* : Luke, *as he was alone, praying, his disciples were with him*, it seems our Lord in journeying with his disciples, sometimes retired for prayer. And) *he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men (Luke, the people) say that I am? the Son of man?* Do they say that I am the Son of man, the Messiah? So the words ought to be placed and pointed, as is plain from the question afterwards proposed to the disciples; namely, but whom say ye that I am? Which I think implies, that Jesus had not as yet directly assumed the title of the Messiah, at least in their hearing. In answer to the question concerning the people, the disciples replied as follows. 14. *And they said, Some say that thou*

\* Mark 17. *Cæsarea Philippi*.] This city, while in the possession of the Canaanites, was called *Lesheim*, Josh. xix. 47. and *Laish*, Judges xviii. 27. But when the children of Dan took it, they named it after their progenitor. In latter times, it was called *Paneas*, from the mountain beneath which it stood. The situation of *Paneas* pleased Philip the tetrarch so exceedingly, that he resolved to make it the seat of his court. For which purpose he enlarged and adorned it with many sumptuous buildings, and called it *Cæsarea*, in honour of the Roman emperor. The tetrarch's own name however was commonly added, to distinguish it from the other *Cæsarea*, so often mentioned in the Jewish history.

The city named simply *Cæsarea*, was a fine sea port on the Mediterranean sea, between *Dora* and *Joppa*, and was formerly called *Straton's Tower*. It was rebuilt by *Herod the first*, who greatly enlarged and beautified it with many fine edifices of polished marble, some of them for public and others of them for private use. But the greatest and most beneficial of all his works here, was the harbour, which he made equal in largeness to the *Piræus* at *Athens*. Naturally it was an open bay, and so exposed to the southern storms, that ships were obliged to anchor in the deep. To remedy this inconvenience, *Herod* inclosed as much of the harbour as was fit to receive a large fleet, by throwing into the sea, where it was twenty fathom deep, huge stones, most of which were fifty feet long, eighteen broad, and nine thick. The mole that was thus raised was 200 feet long, and swept round in a circle, so as to leave the harbour open to the north, whence in those countries the fair weather cometh. That part of the mole which was nearest to the land had a wall erected upon it with turrets; also it had inns built for the reception of sailors. The whole port was surrounded with a row of superb edifices of polished marble, and on a rising ground in the middle was the temple of *Cesar*, which shewed itself at a distance to those who sailed into the harbour. On this temple were fixed two statues, one for *Rome* and the other for *Cesar*. The common sewers, which emptied themselves into the haven, were admirable for their length, greatness and workmanship. There was also a theatre of stone, and on the south side of the port a large amphitheatre, which commanded an extensive prospect towards the sea. In executing these great undertakings, *Herod* spent only twelve years; and having finished them, he named the city *Cæsarea*, in compliment to his patron *Augustus*. Such is the account which *Josephus* gives of the rebuilding of *Straton's tower*. The beauty of this *Cæsarea*, and the conveniencies of its situation were so extraordinary, that when the Romans reduced *Judea* into the form of a province, they made it the seat of their government, preferably even to *Jerusalem* itself.



them art *John the Baptist, some Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets.* (Luke, *one of the old prophets is risen again.*) Most part of the people took Jesus for a different person from what he was, because he had nothing of the outward pomp and grandeur with which they supposed the Messiah was to be adorned. Wherefore, that he might know whether his disciples, who had long enjoyed the benefit of his doctrine and miracles, had formed a more just idea of his character, he asked them, what they thought of him themselves? Matt. xvi. 15. *He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?* 16. *And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art (Mark, the Christ; Luke, the Christ of God) Christ the Son of the living God.* Simon, in name of the rest, replied, that they firmly believed him to be their long expected Messiah, who was a person of infinitely greater dignity than either John Baptist, or Elias, or Jeremias, or any other prophet, being the Son of the living God. The epithet of *living* is given to the supreme Being with great propriety, as it distinguishes him from the heathen idols, which were things without life, mere stocks and stones, the workmanship of mens hands. The title of Messiah Jesus accepted, congratulating Simon on the knowledge which he had of his person and function, a knowledge which had been communicated to him, neither by the sentence of the Sanhedrim declaring Jesus to be Messiah, nor by the authority of any human testimony whatsoever, but merely by the teaching of God. (See on John vi. 45. § 62.) 17. *And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.* Moreover, in allusion to his surname of Peter, which signifies a rock, Jesus promised that he should have a principal hand in establishing his kingdom. The Christian church was to be erected on his labours as on a solid foundation, so that it should never be destroyed while the world last d. 18. *And I say also unto thee, that \* thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church;* in pronouncing these words, Jesus probably put his hand upon Peter's shoulder: *and † the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.* 19. *And I will give unto*

\* Ver. 18. *Thou art Peter.*] The words, *Thou art Peter*, are emphatical. Simon had said to Jesus, *Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God*: Jesus in answer, says to him, *Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church*; as it were making an acknowledgment of Simon's dignity, or rather conferring an high dignity on this apostle.

† Ibid. *The gates of hell*] Πύλαι ᾗδου, the gates of hell, or death, is a periphrasis for hell or death itself. So, the phrase is used, Isa xxxviii. 10, where Hezekiah speaking of himself, says, *I shall go (εἰς πύλας ᾗδου) to the gates of death, I shall die.* Our Lord's meaning therefore was, that the Christian church should never be destroyed, no, not by the united force of men and devils combined against it.



*unto thee \* the keys of the kingdom of heaven, thou shalt open the gospel dispensation both to Jews and Gentiles ; for thou shalt be the first preacher of the gospel to both, in point of time.— And † whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven,*

\* Ver. 19. *The keys of the kingdom* ] The keys of the kingdom of heaven, which on this occasion were promised to Peter, are to be understood metaphorically. For our Lord's meaning was, that Peter should open the gates of the kingdom of heaven, or gospel dispensation, both to Jews and Gentiles, i. e. should be the first who preached the gospel to them. And in this sense, Peter seems to have understood the matter himself, Acts xv. 7. Or, by *the keys*, we may understand power and authority, which is the meaning of the metaphor in the Old Testament. According to this interpretation, the power of *binding* and *loosing* added to the power of the keys, may be considered as explicatory thereof. After my ascension into heaven, I will give thee and thy companions in the apostolate, authority to order all the affairs of my church, so that whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, &c. It can be no objection against this interpretation, that it connects the idea of binding and loosing with that of the keys, contrary to the exact propriety of the two metaphors ; for all who have studied the scriptures know, that in many passages the ideas and expressions are accommodated to the subject matter, rather than to the precedent metaphor.

† Ver. 19. *Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth.*] The power of binding and loosing now conferred on Peter, and afterwards on all the apostles, (Matt. xviii. 18. § 74.) was a power of declaring the laws of the gospel, and the terms of salvation. For in the Jewish language, to *bind* and *loose* were words made use of by the doctors, to signify the unlawfulness or lawfulness of things, as Selden, Buxtorff, and Lightfoot have proved. Wherefore our Lord's meaning was, whatever things thou shalt *bind up from men*, or declare forbidden on earth, shall be forbidden by heaven ; and whatever things thou shalt *loose to men*, permit to be done, shall be lawful and obligatory in the esteem of heaven. Accordingly it may be observed, that the gender made use of in both passages, agrees to this interpretation : In that under consideration, it is *ō* not *ōs* ; in the other, it is *ōs* not *ōus*. There are some, however, who by the *power of binding and loosing*, understand the power of actually remitting and retaining mens sins directly ; and in support of their opinion, they produce John xx. 22. *Receive, ye the Holy Ghost. 23. Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them ; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained* But the expression of forgiving sins, is used by our Lord, to denote the removal of their temporal punishment, Matt. ix. 2. *Jesus seeing their faith, said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee* : For that it was the temporal punishment only of this man's sins which our Lord now forgave, is plain, I think, from the reason of the pardon, viz. the faith, not of the man himself, who appears to have been wholly passive in the matter, but of those who brought him in, which could have no influence in obtaining for him an eternal pardon. (See on Matt. viii. 17. § 19 ) It may therefore be justly doubted whether our Lord ever bestowed on his apostles a particular power of remitting and retaining any thing but the temporal punishment of mens sins, unless we choose to call the power of declaring the terms of salvation, now committed to Peter, and afterwards to the other apostles, a power of remitting and retaining mens sins, because, according to those terms, men shall be either acquitted or condemned. This high power of declaring the terms of salvation, and precepts of the gospel, the apostles did not enjoy in its full extent, till the memorable day of Pentecost, when they



us, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven. Whatsoever thou shalt preach as a precept of the gospel, or term of mens salvation, shall be ratified in heaven as such, because thou shalt have the infallible direction of the Spirit of God in this matter.

Matt. xvi. 20. *Then charged he his disciples, that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ.* Luke ix. 21. *And he straitly charged them, and commanded them to tell no man that thing.* 22. *Saying, \* The Son of man must (Matt. go unto Jerusalem, and) suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day.* Mark expresses it thus, viii. 31. *And after three days rise again: ~~Kai meta tēis tēnēas anasthēis~~, and rise again on the third day.* See this translation justified in the note on Matt. xii. 40. § 48. Besides, the chief priests and Pharisees understood the prophecy in no other sense. For having been informed of it by common report, or having heard Jesus utter it on some other occasion, they came to Pilate after his crucifixion, Matt. xxvii. 63. "Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. 64. Command, therefore, that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples," &c. According to the chief priests and Pharisees, therefore, *Meta tēis tēnēas tynēonai* signifies, *on the third day I will rise again.* Just as John xx. 26. *Meta tēnēas octa* signifies undoubtedly, *on the eighth day*; namely, after the precedent Sabbath. To conclude, this rendering brings Mark to agree with the other evangelists. Jesus forbade his disciples to tell any man that he was Messiah, because, according to the divine decree, he was

they received the Holy Ghost in the plenitude of his gifts. After this, their decisions on points of doctrine and duty, being all given by inspiration, were infallible definitions, and ratified in heaven. Here then was an immense honour conferred on the apostles, and what must yield great consolation to the pious. There is nothing doubtful in the gospel, much less false. But we may safely rest the salvation of our souls on the discoveries there made to us, since they have all come originally from God.

\* Luke 22. *The Son of man must suffer.*] Our Lord frequently after this repeated the prediction of his sufferings; for example, Matth. xvii. 22. xx. 18. xxvi. 2. Luke xvii. 25. xxii. 15. But it is remarkable, that on none of these occasions, was the prophecy delivered to any but the twelve, and a few select women, (Luke xxiv. 6. 8.) one instance excepted, viz. Luke xvii. 25. where it was expressed in terms somewhat obscure. The multitude of the disciples were never let into the secret, because it might have made them desert Christ, as they had not, like the apostles, raised expectations of particular preferments in his kingdom, to bias their understandings, and hinder them from perceiving the meaning of the prediction. It is true, he foretold his resurrection from the dead more publicly; for oftener than once he appealed to it as the principal proof of his mission, even in presence of the priests, as is evident from their mentioning it to Pilate, Matt. xxvii. 63. *Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again.* It seems the priests had been often our Lord's hearers,



was to be rejected by the great men as a false Christ, and to suffer the punishment of death; circumstances which could not fail to give his followers great offence, as they did not yet understand the nature of his kingdom. For which reason he thought it better to leave every one to form a judgment of his character from his doctrine and miracles, than in all places to assume the title of Messiah publicly, under such disadvantages. Or his meaning may have been this; because it is determined that Messiah shall suffer death, it is not proper to assume that title publicly, lest the people declaring in my behalf endeavour to prevent the execution of the divine decree. Mark viii. 32. *And he spake that saying openly, (παρρησια, plainly.)* Our Lord thought fit to foretell his own sufferings plainly, to bear down any towering imaginations that might have sprung up in the apostles minds from the preceding discourses. For their faith was now so confirmed, that they could bear the discovery, without being in danger of forsaking him. Nevertheless Peter, to whom the power of the keys, or place of high steward in the kingdom, as he would take it, was promised, could not help being very much displeased to hear his Master talk of dying at Jerusalem, immediately after he had been saluted Messiah, and had accepted the title. Wherefore, taking him aside, Peter rebuked him for the expression, which he was so bold as to think unguarded. Matt. xvi. 22. *Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord, this shall not be unto thee.* 23 *But he turned and said unto Peter, (Mark, But when he had turned about, and looked on his disciples, who by the air of their countenance seemed to approve what they heard Peter saying to him, he rebuked Peter, saying) Get thee behind me, Satan, thou art an offence unto me; for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.* It is remarkable, that our Lord, immediately after conferring on Peter the high dignity before-mentioned, did openly, in the hearing of all the disciples, call him Satan, or adversary; and declare that he had then no relish for the divine appointments, but was influenced merely by human views and expectations of worldly interest. If the Papists did rightly attend to this passage of the history, they would see their fancies about the primacy of Peter which they build upon it, in a better light than they seem to do.

§ LXXI. *In the country of Caesarea Philippi, Jesus inculcates the virtue of self-denial, (see § 93. 105.) and declares that he will judge the world at the last day.* Matt. xvi. 24,—28. Mark viii. 34, 35. ix. 1. Luke ix. 23,—27.

BECAUSE Peter's indecent behaviour, just now mentioned, proceeded from his love of the world and its pleasures, Jesus declared publicly, that all who would be his disciples, and share with him



him in the glory of his kingdom, must deny themselves. Mark viii. 34. *And when he had called the people unto him, with his disciples also, he said unto them, (Luke, all) Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself: that is, be in constant readiness to renounce every earthly pleasure, with life itself, when called to do so. (See on Luke xiv. 33. § 93.) And in ordinary cases he must \* take up his cross (Luke, daily) and follow me. (See on Matt. x. 38. § 40. After having undergone many afflictions, the disciples of Christ may still look for more, which when laid upon them, they must sustain with equal patience, following their Master in the footsteps of his afflictions. This indeed is a very hard and difficult lesson, but at the same time it is absolutely necessary, because, if in order to preserve our temporal life we displease Christ, we shall lose what is really and truly our life, the eternal happiness of our souls. Whereas, if we will die rather than disobey him, we shall obtain infinite and endless joys. Luke ix. 24. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it, but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, (Mark, and the gospel's) the same shall save it. (Matt. find it.) To carry home the argument more closely, he put them in mind of the method according to which men estimate things. If God should offer the riches of Solomon, the strength of Sampson, the policy of Ahithophel, the beauty of Absalom, the eloquence of Apollos, universal monarchy, and all kinds of pleasures, and should say, Take them for one hour, and then die; who is the man that would not immediately reject the proposed condition, and reply, that life is better than them all? but will men forego every earthly thing for life, the life of the body? and will they not part with them, nay, and with life itself, for their souls? since the longest any one can enjoy this life with its pleasures, is, in comparison of eternity, no longer than he enjoys the good things mentioned, who dies in the same hour he receives them. Matt. xvi. 26. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? (Luke, lose himself, or be cast away?) or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? namely, at the day of judgment. But that this argument, by which the necessity of self-denial is so clearly established, might have the greater weight, our Lord spake more particularly concerning the rewards and punishments of a future state, assuring his disciples, that they are all to be distributed by himself, the Father having appointed him universal judge, so that his enemies cannot flatter themselves with the hope of escaping condign punishment, nor his friends be in the*

\* *Take up his cross.*] It was the custom anciently for the malefactor to carry the cross on which he was to suffer to the place of execution. Hence the expression of *taking up one's cross*, was used to signify his suffering any evil willingly.



the least afraid of losing their reward, Mark viii. 38. \* *Who-  
ever therefore shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, particu-  
larly my precept of self-denial, in this † adulterous and sinful ge-  
neration*: whosoever is not heartily willing to sustain the scoffs of  
a wicked world, to which the profession and practice of my re-  
ligion may expose him, *of him also shall the Son of man be  
ashamed, when he cometh* (Luke, in his own glory and) *in the  
glory of his Father, with the holy angels*: He shall be ashamed  
to acknowledge one for his disciple, who has acted so unlike to  
him, and so unworthy of his religion. And to encourage them  
the more, he told them he would come to judge the world, not in  
his present low and contemned state, but most magnificently ar-  
rayed, both in his own glory and in his Father's; would come,  
not attended by twelve weak disciples, but surrounded with num-  
berless hosts of mighty angels. Matth. xvi. 27. *For the Son of  
man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels, and  
then he shall reward every man according to his works*; reward  
him, not with the honours of a temporal kingdom, great offices,  
and large possessions, but with the joys of immortality. *He shall  
come in his own glory*, the glory peculiar to him as God-man;  
probably the majesty and splendour of his glorified body, a visi-  
ble representation of which he exhibited in the transfiguration,  
about a week after this discourse was delivered. He shall come  
also *in the glory of the Father*, augustly arrayed with the inaccessi-  
ble light wherein God dwells, (1 Tim. vi. 16. See on Acts i. 11.  
§ 160.) and which darting through, and enlightening all space  
with its ineffable brightness, shall make even the sun to disap-  
pear. Withal, to render his advent to judge the world the more  
grand, he will come *with the holy angels*, attended by the whole  
host, (Matt. xxiv. 31.) a vast train, ready to execute his com-  
mands. In this majesty, *the Lord shall descend from heaven with  
a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of  
God*, (1 Thess. iv. 16.) making heaven, earth and hell to resound.

The

\* Ver 38. *Whoever shall be ashamed.*] In this and other passages of  
scripture, the profession of the Christian religion is expressly required of  
all who believe it, because it is the great means of continuing it in the  
world, and of preserving its evidences. See on Matt. x. 33. § 40.

† *Ibid. Adulterous generation.*] This expression does not imply, that the  
generation of which Jesus spake, was more addicted to the sin of adultery  
properly so called, than any other generation. It is a phrase taken from  
the well known metaphor of a marriage contract, whereby God anciently  
represented the relation in which the Jewish people stood to him. For  
the manifold violations of his laws which at this time the Jews were guilty  
of, particularly their rejection of the Son of God, making void God's  
covenant with them as a people, were fitly represented under the idea of  
adultery, in allusion to the ancient descriptions given by the prophets of  
that covenant. The term therefore here, as in many other passages, signi-  
fies any gross wickedness whatever, and among the rest their infidelity.  
See on Matt. xii. 39 § 48.



all countries, and times hear the tremendous call. The living filled with joy, exult at the approach of God; the wicked, filled with inexpressible terror, send up doleful cries, and are all changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. Behold the dead press forth from their graves, following each other in close procession. The earth seems quick, and the sea gives up its dead. Mark the beauty, the boldness, and the gladness of some, springing up to honour, but the ghastly countenances, the trembling, and the despair of others, *arising to shame, and everlasting contempt*. See how amazed and terrified they look! with what vehemence they wish the extinction of their being! Fain would they fly, but cannot. Impelled by a force strong as necessity, they hasten to the place of judgment. As they advance, the sight of the tribunal from afar strikes new terror; they come on in the deepest silence, and gather round the throne by thousands of thousands. In the mean time the angels, having brought up their bands from the uttermost parts of the earth, fly round the numberless multitude, singing melodiously with loud voices, the joy that the day of general retribution is come, when vice shall be thrown down from its high usurpation, virtue exalted from its debasement to its superior station, the intricacies of Providence unravelled, the perfections of God vindicated, the church of God purchased with his blood, cleared of them that do iniquity, and of every thing that offendeth, and established impeccable for ever. *Psal. lxxviii. 1. Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered. As smoke is driven away, so drive them away. As wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God. But let the righteous be glad, let them rejoice before him, yea, let them exceedingly rejoice.* *Rev. xviii. 8. For strong is the Lord God who judgeth.* And now the Son of man appears on the throne of his glory, and all nations, princes, warriors, nobles, the rich, the poor, all entirely stript of their train and attendance, and every external distinction, stand naked and equal before him, silently waiting to be sentenced to their unchangeable state. And every individual is filled with an awful consciousness, that he in particular is the object of the observation of Almighty God, manifest in his sight, and actually under his eye, so that there is not one single person concealed in the immensity of the crowd. The Judge, who can be biassed by no bribes, softened by no subtle insinuations, imposed upon by no feigned excuses, having been himself privy to the most secret actions of each, needs no evidence, but distinguishes with an unerring certainty. He speaks! *Come from among them, my people, that ye receive not of their plagues.* They separate. They feel their Judge within them, and hasten to their proper places: the righteous on the one hand of the throne, and the wicked on the other; not so much as one of the wicked daring to join himself



with the just. Here the righteous, most beautiful with the brightness of virtue, stand serene in their looks, and full of hope, at the bar of God; a glad company; whilst the wicked, confounded at the remembrance of their lives, and terrified with the thought of what is come, hang down their heads, inwardly cursing the day of their birth, and wishing a thousand and a thousand times, that the rocks would fall on them, and the mountains cover them. But in vain. For there is no escaping, nor appealing from this tribunal. Behold, with mercy shining in his countenance, and mild majesty, the King invites the righteous to take possession of the kingdom prepared for them from the creation of the world. But with angry frowns he drives the wicked away into punishment that shall have no end, no refreshment, no alleviation. *Everlasting punishment!* O the rejoicing! Oh the lamenting! The triumphant shouting of ascending saints, caught up in the clouds to be ever with the Lord! The horror, the despair, the hideous shriekings of the damned, when they see hell gaping, hear the devils roaring, and feel the unspeakable torment of an awakened conscience. Now they bitterly cry for death, but death flies from them. Now they envy the righteous, and gladly would be such, but all too late!—Lo, the Son of God bows his head, the signal for his servants the heavens and the earth to depart, their work being at an end. See! with a terrible thundering noise the heavens pass away, the elements melt with fervent heat, and the earth, and all the works that be therein, are burnt up. The frame of nature dissolves! Earth, seas, skies, all vanish together, making way for the new heaven and the new earth. It appears! The happy land of promise, formed by the hand of God, large, beautiful, and pleasant, a fit habitation for his favourite people, and long expected by them as their country. Here all the righteous, great and small, are assembled, making one vast blessed society, even the kingdom and city of God. Here God manifests himself in a peculiar manner to his servants, and wipes away all tears from off their faces, and adorns them with the beauties of immortality, glorious to behold. Here they drink fulness of joys, from the chrysal river proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, and eat of the tree of life. And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain. But every one happy in himself, imparts the blessing to his fellows; for mutual love warms every breast, love like that which subsists between the Father and the Son, mutual conference on the sublimest subjects refreshes every spirit with the divine repasts of wisdom, and joys flowing from the tenderest friendships, fixed on the stable foundation of an immoveable virtue, gladden every heart. All the servants of God serve him in perfect holiness, see his face, feel transports of joy, and, by the reflection of his glory, shine as the sun



sun in the firmament for ever and ever. And there shall be no night there, and they need no candle, neither the light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light, and they reign for ever and ever. Happy day! happy place! and happy people! O blest hope of joining that glorious society! *All the servants of God shall serve him, and see his face*: Serve God, and see his face! What an immensity of felicity is here! Imagination faints with the fatigue of stretching itself, to comprehend the vast, the unmeasurable thought!

Jesus fitly inculcated the necessity of self-denial, from the consideration of a judgment to come, the most awful and important event in the whole compass of our duration, and which the word of God directs us to believe will be attended with such circumstances as those just now described. His intention was, that we should fortify ourselves by this reflection, that it is eligible to endure a little now, when that little will preserve us from enduring unspeakably more hereafter, and lead us to the possession of infinite and endless joys. Wherefore, if our great Master should ever honour any of us so far as to call us forth to suffer for him, let us do it bravely, and be true to God, to religion, and to our own souls; having our eye always steadily fixed on the bright crown, the white robes, the triumphant palms, by which the valiant and illustrious band of martyrs are distinguished from all the other inhabitants of the abodes above. But because the doctrine of Christ's being constituted universal Judge, might appear to the disciples incredible at that time, on account of his humiliation, he told them, that some of them should not taste of death, till they saw him coming in his kingdom, and by that had not only a proof of his being the Judge, but an example of the judgment he was to execute. Mark ix. 1. *And he said unto them, Matt. xvi. 28. Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.* (Luke, *till they see the kingdom of God, Mark, come with power.*) Do not doubt that there shall be a day of judgment, when I shall come clothed with divine majesty, and attended by millions of angels, to render unto men according as their actions in this life have been good or bad. There are some here present that shall not die, till they see a faint representation

• Ver. 28. *Coming in his kingdom.*] Raphelius would have the verse thus translated: *Shall not taste of death, till they shall see the Son of man going into his kingdom*: (ερχομεν ω εν βασιλειαν αυτου). For he understands it of the disciples, beholding Christ's ascension into heaven, where he took possession of his mediatorial kingdom, and which without doubt was a very proper proof of his coming again to judge the world. That the word ερχομαι signifies to go, as well as to come, Raphelius proves from Acts xxviii. 14. Luke ii. 44. See on Matt. xvi. 5. § 63. And the use of ω for ω, he supports by John v. 4. Luke xxiii. 42. Nevertheless, the common translation is more natural and just, as appears from the parallel passages.



mentation of the glory in which I will come, and an eminent example of this my power exercised on the men of the present age. Accordingly, the disciples saw their Master coming in his kingdom, when they were witnesses of his transfiguration, resurrection, and ascension; had the miraculous gifts of the Spirit conferred upon them; and lived to see Jerusalem, with the Jewish state destroyed, and the gospel propagated through the greatest part of the then known world.

§ LXXII. *Jesus is transfigured upon an high mountain in the country of Cæsarea Philippi, and foretells his own sufferings and resurrection a third time.* See § 70. 73. Matt. xvii. 1,—13. Mark ix. 2,—13. Luke ix. 28,—36.

ABOUT six days, if we reckon exclusively, and about eight days, if we reckon inclusively, after our Lord had accepted the title of Messiah, happening to be with his disciples and the multitude in the country of Cæsarea Philippi, he left them in the plain, and went up into an exceeding high mountain, with Peter the most zealous, James the most active, (see § 37.) and John the most beloved disciple. In this solitude, while Jesus was praying with the three, he was transfigured. Luke ix. 28. *\* And it came to pass, about an eight days after these sayings, (Matt. Mark, after six days) he took Peter, and John, and James, and † went up into a mountain (Mark, an high mountain apart by themselves)*

\* Luke 28. *And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings.* What Luke calls eight days, is by Matthew and Mark termed six days. The like differences are to be met with in profane historians. For instance, Suetonius Galba, c. 17. tells us, that Piso before he was murdered, had lived six days in the character of Cesar; and Piso himself in his speech to the soldiers mentions the same space of time: *Sextus dies agitur commilitones ex quo, &c.* "It is now the sixth day since I was adopted Cesar." Tacit. Hist. lib. 1. cap. 29. Nevertheless, the same Tacitus in the 48th chapter of his first book, tells us, that he was Cesar only four days. And chapter 19th of the same book, that there were only four days between his being created Cesar and his death. See on Matt. xii. 40. § 48.

† Ibid. *Went up into a mountain.* Tradition has generally conferred the honour of the transfiguration on mount Tabor, famed in ancient history for the victory which Deborah and Barak gained over Sisera, general of Jabin, king of Canaan, Judges iv. 14. Reland, in his Palæst. Illustrat. lib. i. cap. 51. observes, that this tradition took its rise from Mark ix. 2. where it is said that Jesus carried Peter, James, and John (*ὡς ἄρα ὑψήλων κατ' ἰδίαν μόνους*) into an high mountain apart by themselves. It seems the words *κατ' ἰδίαν*, were thought to describe the position of the mountain. And because Tabor is very high, and stands in the plain of Esdraelōn, at a distance from other hills, they thought it could be said of no other mountain so properly, that it is an high mountain by itself. Hence the tradition of our Lord's being transfigured on Tabor might arise; especially as this mountain is not only high, but verdant also and woody, and of a beautiful regular form, according to the account given of it by Adamnanus, a writer of the seventh century, De loc. sacris, lib. xi. Nevertheless, the order



themselves) to pray. Luke ix. 29. *And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistering.* (Mark, *And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow ; so as no fuller on earth can white them.*) Matthew says, xvii. 2. *And he was \* transfigured before them, and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.* In the transfiguration, the face of Jesus became radiant and dazzling ; for it shone like the sun in its unclouded meridian clearness, and so was incomparably more glorious than the face of Moses at the giving of the law. At the same time his garments acquired a snowy whiteness, far beyond any thing that human art could produce ; a whiteness bright as light, and sweetly refulgent, but in a degree inferior to the radiancy of his countenance. Thus for a little while, during his state of humiliation, the Son of God permitted the glory of his divinity to break forth, as it were, and shine through the veil of his human nature, with which it was covered. Moreover, to heighten the grandeur and solemnity of the scene, Moses, the great lawgiver of the Jews, and Elijah, who had been a most zealous defender of the law, appeared in the beauties of immortality, wherewith the blest above are adorned. Mark ix. 4. *And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses ; and they were talking with him.* Luke ix. 30. *And behold there talked with Jesus two men, which were Moses and Elias.* 31. *Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.* 32. *But Peter, and they that were with him, were heavy with sleep ; and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him.* It seems the three disciples were so unlucky as not to see the transfiguration begin ; for happening to fall asleep

in order of the history determines the transfiguration to some mountain not far from Cesarea Philippi, rather than to Tabor, which was situated in the south of Galilee. For after the transfiguration, when Jesus had cured an epileptic boy, it is said, Mark ix. 30. that *they departed and passed through Galilee*, (*παρεπορεύοντο δια της Γαλιλαίας*) and then came to Capernaum. Now, it is not very probable that the evangelist would in this manner have narrated our Lord's journey from the mount of transfiguration to Capernaum, if that mountain had been in Galilee, the region in which Capernaum stood ; especially if, as the continuators of Chemnitius's Harmony affirm, the word *παρεπορεύοντες* signifies *celeriter, latenter, et quasi in cursu transire*. Yet upon the faith of the tradition mentioned above, the Christians very early built a monastery and church on the top of Tabor, which Adamnanus says, spreads itself into an ample plain surrounded with a wood. The church was dedicated to Jesus, and his two attendants, Moses and Elias. And from 1 Pet. i. 18. they called the mountain itself, *Age mons, the holy mountain*.

\* Ver. 2. *Transfigured.*] The word *μετεμορφώθη*, in Matthew, implies either that there was a transformation made, in the substance of his body, according to the import of the word in Ovid, and other writers, (see Phil. iii. 21.) or that the outward appearance only of his body was altered, as seems most probable, from the manner in which Luke has expressed it.



in the time of prayer, they lost that pleasure, together with a great part of the conversation which the wisest lawgiver, and most zealous prophet that ever lived, had with the only begotten Son of God, during his residence on earth. In general, however, they heard as much as made them understand, that the subject they talked of was his meritorious sufferings and death, by which he was to redeem the world, a subject that had given great offence to the disciples, and above all to Peter, a few days before this. Probably the streams of light which issued from Christ's body, especially his countenance, and the voices of Moses and Elias talking with him, made such an impression on the senses of the disciples, though buried in sleep, that they awaked. Lifting up their eyes, therefore, the three must have been amazed beyond measure, when they beheld their Master in the majesty of his transfigured state, and his illustrious attendants, whom they might know to be Moses and Elias, by revelation, or by what they said, or by the appellations which Jesus gave them in speaking to them. Peter, particularly, being both afraid and glad at the glorious sight, was in the utmost confusion. Nevertheless, the forwardness of his disposition prompted him to say something; he spake, not knowing well what he said. Mark ix. 5. *And (Luke, it came to pass as they departed from him) Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, (Matt. Lord) it is good for us to be here, and let us make here three tabernacles, (Matt. If thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles) one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. 6. For he wist not what to say, (Luke, not knowing what he said) for they were sore afraid.* The apostles, both before and after the transfiguration, were with their Master in many delightful spots of the country, heard many ravishing sermons, and saw many wonderful miracles; yet in no place, and on no occasion but this, were they ever heard to say, "It is good for us to be here." Peter fancied no doubt, that Jesus had now assumed his proper dignity, that Elias was come according to Malachi's prediction, and that the kingdom was at length begun. Wherefore, in the first hurry of his thoughts, he proposed to provide some accommodation for Jesus and his august assistants, intending perhaps to bring the rest of the disciples, with the multitude from the plain below, to behold his matchless glory. He thought this was better for his Master than to be killed at Jerusalem, concerning which, Jesus had been talking with the messengers from heaven, and the design of which, Peter could not comprehend. But, Matt. xvii. 5. *While he yet spake, \* behold a bright cloud overshadowed them:* (Luke,

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\* Ver. 5. *Behold a bright cloud.*] This cloud which overshadowed Moses and Elias, is called by the apostle Peter, who beheld it, *the excellent glory*, 2 Pet. i. 17. Wherefore it must have been the *shechinah*, or visible symbol of

of



(Luke, *and they feared as they entered into the cloud* : The hopes of the disciples being blasted by the disappearing of the two messengers from heaven, they were thrown into great perturbation, which was heightened by the unusual splendour of the cloud) *and behold a voice, (Mark, Luke, came) out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.* The voice uttering these words, just as Moses and Elias disappeared, intimated, that men were no longer to hearken unto them speaking in the law, but for the future were to obey Jesus; because Moses and Elias, though both eminent in their stations, were only servants, whereas this was God's beloved Son. Besides, the thing uttered by the voice, *Hear ye him* (*αὐτὸν ἀκούετε*) plainly alluding to Deut. xviii. 15. signified, that Jesus was the prophet of whom Moses spake in that passage: "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken:" (LXX. *αὐτὸν ἀκούετε*). When the three disciples heard the voice coming from the cloud, loud as thunder (see John xii. 29. § 113.) and full of divine majesty, such as mortal ears were unaccustomed to hear, they fell flat to the ground on their faces, being in a great panic; an effect which visions of this kind commonly had on the prophets and other holy men to whom they were given, Gen. xv. 12. Isa. vi. 5. Ezek. ii. 1. Dan. x. 8. Rev. i. 17. It seems, human nature could not bear up under such manifestations of the divine presence. In this condition the disciples continued till Jesus approached, and raising them up dispelled their fears. Matt. xvii. 6. *And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid.* 7. *And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid.* 8. *And (Luke, when the voice was past) when they had lift up their eyes, (Mark, And suddenly when they had looked round about) they saw no man save Jesus only (Mark, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves \*).*

Jesus

of the divine presence, as is evident likewise from the words that came out of the cloud, which were the words of God himself. *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him.* No wonder therefore that the disciples feared, as Moses and Elias entered into it. Luke ix. 34.

\* The transfiguration was intended for several important purposes. About six days before it happened, Jesus had predicted his own sufferings and death. At the same time, to prevent his disciples from being dejected by the melancholy prospect, as well as from falling into despair when the dismal scene should open, he told them, that though in appearance he was nothing but a man, and affliction was generally to be the lot of his disciples, he would come hereafter in great glory as universal judge, and render unto every man according to his deeds, Matt xvi. 27, 28. And for proof of this, he declared, that some of themselves should not taste of death till they saw him coming in his kingdom; saw a lively representation of the glory which he spake of, and were witnesses to an exercise of his



Jesus and his disciples having been in the mountain all night, (see Luke ix. 37. § 73.) the transfiguration may be supposed to have happened either in the day-time, or in the night. That it happened in the night-time is probable from the disciples falling asleep while Jesus prayed, a circumstance which could not happen by day to all the three at once, and in the open air. Next morning, as they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus charged

his power as judge; he meant on his enemies the unbelieving Jews, who were to be punished by him with the most terrible destruction that ever befel any nation. The first article of his promise he fulfilled by the transfiguration, wherein he gave three of his apostles both a visible representation, and also a clear proof of the glory in which he will come to judgment. That this was one principal end of the transfiguration and of the voice from heaven which attended it, we learn from the apostle Peter, who urges both to demonstrate the certainty of Christ's coming: *2 Pet. i. 16. For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty. 17. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. 18. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.* Nevertheless, other purposes may likewise have been served by the transfiguration, as, 1. The conference which our Lord had with Moses and Elias, concerning the sufferings he was to meet with in Jerusalem, might animate him to encounter them with resolution, and make the disciples sensible how agreeable it was to the doctrine of Moses and the prophets, that Messiah should be evil treated and die, before he entered into his glory. 2. The appearing of these two great men, so long after they had gone into the invisible world, was a sensible proof and clear example of the immortality of the soul, very necessary in those times, when the opinion of the Sadducees was so prevalent. 3. To find Moses and Elias assisting Jesus in the new dispensation, must have given great satisfaction to the Jews, and particularly to the apostles, who thus could not doubt that the gospel was the completion and perfection of the law. For had it not been so, Moses, the giver of the law, and Elias, who with a flaming zeal had maintained it in times of the greatest corruption, would not have appeared on earth to encourage Jesus in his design of setting it aside. 4. The three apostles were allowed to be witnesses of their master's glory in the mountain, that they might not be offended by that depth of affliction into which they in particular were soon to see him plunged. 5. The transfiguration demonstrated, that all the sufferings befalling Jesus were on his part perfectly voluntary, it being as easy to have delivered himself from dying, as to have adorned himself with celestial glory. 6. The glory with which our Lord's body was adorned in the transfiguration, exhibited a specimen of the beauty and perfection of the glorified bodies of the saints after their resurrection. This the apostle intimates, *Phil. iii. 21. Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself.* It is intimated also by Luke; for although the glory of Moses and Elias at the transfiguration was vastly inferior to that of Jesus, he says expressly that they appeared *in glory*; not because they appeared in heaven, but because they appeared with glorious bodies, like to those which the saints shall have in heaven. There can be no doubt of this with respect to Elias, for his body was changed and fitted for immortality when he was translated. And as for Moses, though he had not his own body, he might have one formed for the occasion.



ed the apostles to conceal what they had seen, till he should arise from the dead. *Matt. xvii. 9. And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision (Mark, what things they had seen) to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead.* He knew that the world, and even his own disciples, were not yet capable of comprehending the design of his transfiguration, nor of the appearing of Moses and Elias; and that if this transaction had been published before his resurrection, it might have appeared incredible, because hitherto nothing but afflictions and persecutions had attended him. *Luke 36. And they kept it (Mark, that saying, that matter) close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen.* They did not tell the vision even to their brethren apostles. The disciples had never heard from the doctors, that the Messiah was to die, far less that he was to be raised from the dead. On the contrary, they thought he was to abide for ever, *John xii. 34. and that there was to be no end of his kingdom.* Wherefore they were utterly at a loss to understand what their Master meant, when he spake of his rising again from the dead; and being afraid to ask a particular explication of the matter, they disputed much among themselves about it to no purpose. *Mark ix. 10. And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning (Gr. debating) one with another, what the rising from the dead should mean.* Being also much surprized at the sudden departure of Elias, and at their Master's ordering them to keep his having appeared a secret, they had no sooner finished their dispute about what the rising from the dead should mean, than addressing themselves to Jesus, they proposed this doubt. Since Elias has gone away so soon, and since thou orderest us to keep his appearing a secret, how come the scribes to teach on all occasions, that Elias must appear before Messiah erects his empire? *Mark xi. And they (Matt. his disciples) asked him, saying, Why (Matt. then) say the scribes, that Elias must first come?* Supposing that Elias was to have an active hand in modelling and settling the kingdom, they never doubted that he would have abode a while on earth, and knowing that the scribes affirmed openly that Elias was to appear, they could see no reason for concealing the thing. That this is the connexion of the disciples question, is plain from *Matt. xvii. 9. Tell the vision to no man until the Son of man be risen from the dead. 10. And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come? 11. And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things.* Jesus not only acknowledged the necessity

\* *Ver. 11. And restore all things.]* That is, as the angel citing the prophecy explains it, *Luke i. 16. Many of the children of Israel shall be turned to the Lord their God. 17. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power*



cessity of Elijah's coming before the Messiah, according to Malachi's prediction, but he assured his disciples, that he was already come, and described the treatment he had met with from the nation, in such a manner as to make them understand that he spake of John Baptist. At the same time he told them, that though the Baptist's ministry was excellently calculated for producing all the effects ascribed to it by the prophets, they needed not be surprised to find, that it had not had all the success which might have been expected from it, and that the Baptist had met with much opposition and persecution. For, said he, both the person and the preaching of the Messiah himself, shall meet with the same treatment. Matt. xvii. 12. *But I say unto you, (λεγω δι υμιν, Nay, I say unto you) that Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed; likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them.* Mark ix. 12. *And he answered and told them, Elias verily cometh first and restoreth all things.* (There is here an allusion to Malachi iv. 6. "He shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers." See the note on Matthew, verse 11.) *And how it is written: He not only told them, that Elias cometh first, but he told them how it is written of the Son of man, that he must suffer many things, and be set at nought.* This clause is interjected by the evangelist into our Lord's answer. For he proceeded thus. 13. *But I say unto you, that Elias is indeed come.* (αλλα λεγω υμιν: I not only allow that Elias must first come, but, I assure you that he is come already.) *And they have done unto him whatsoever they listed, as it is written of him: They have treated him in the manner that was predicted of him.* Matthew, 13. *Then the disciples understood, that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.* By considering attentively the particulars which he spake concerning the person whom he named Elias, they knew that he meant John Baptist.

§ LXXIII. *In the country of Casarea Philippi Jesus cures a youth that was afflicted with an epilepsy, declares the efficacy of prayer and fasting in the working of miracles, and foretells his own sufferings the fourth time, § 72. 101. also his resurrection.*

*of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.* That this was the true restoration of all things, to be accomplished by Elias, is evident from the LXX. who in translating the original passage, make use of the word found here in the evangelist; ἀποκατασκευάζειν, *reduces cor.* Nevertheless, by the restoration of all things, the Jews seem to have understood the revival of the kingdom of David in their nation, to be accomplished by the assistance of Elias. Hence the apostles question to Jesus before his ascension into heaven, Acts i. 6. "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore (ἀποκαθίσταναι) the kingdom of Israel?"



*tion the fourth time, § 106. Matt. xvii. 14,—23. Mark ix. 14,—32. Luke ix. 37,—45.*

As Jesus came down to the plain with his disciples, he saw the nine surrounded by a great multitude, and the scribes disputing with them. Probably the multitude had remained there all night, waiting till Jesus should return. When the people looked on him, as he was coming, they were greatly amazed, and running to him, they saluted him with particular reverence. It seems, that as Moses's face shone several hours after he had been with God on the mount, so something of the glory of the transfiguration remaining in our Lord's countenance, and on his raiment, might astonish the multitude, and attract their veneration. Mark ix. 14. *And (Luke, it came to pass, that on the next day) when he came (Luke, down from the hill) to his disciples, he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning (Gr. disputing) with them. 15. And straightway all the people, when they beheld him were greatly amazed, and running to him, saluted him. When the salutations of the multitude were over, Jesus asked the scribes, what was the subject of their debate with his disciples. Mark ix. 16. And he asked the scribes, What question ye with them? what is the subject of your dispute with them? 17. And one of the multitude (Matt. a certain man kneeling down to him) answered (Luke, cried out) and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit. (Matt. have mercy on my son, for \* he is lunatic and sore vexed. Luke, for he is mine only child, and lo, a spirit taketh him.) 18. And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him, (Luke, and he suddenly crieth out; Matt. for oft-times he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water) and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away, (Luke, and bruising him hardly departeth from him) and I spake to thy disciples, (Matt. I brought him to thy disciples) that they should cast him out, and they could not. From the man's giving this narrative, in answer to what Jesus said to the scribes, what question ye with them? it appears, that the scribes had been disputing with the disciples about the cure of this youth, which they had unsuccessfully attempted. Perhaps their want of success had given the scribes occasion to boast, that a devil was found which neither the disciples nor their Master was able to cast out. But the disciples affirming, that this devil, however obstinate, was not able to withstand their Master, the debate was drawn out to some length. And to say the truth, as Jesus had already given many undeniable demonstrations of his power,*

\* Matt. 15. *He is lunatic* ] *σαληνιαζεται*. The English word *lunatic* always implies madness; but the Greek word is applied to any disease that is under the influence of the moon, such as the epilepsy, which was the ~~illness~~ <sup>disease</sup> wherewith this man's son was afflicted.



power, the behaviour of the scribes in this, as in every instance, discovered the most criminal infidelity. Wherefore, he treated them no worse than they deserved, in calling them a faithless and perverse generation, that was altogether intolerable, because they had resisted demonstrations of his power, sufficient to have convinced the most abandoned. Mark ix. 19. *He answered him and said, he answered the man by saying to the scribes, O faithless (Matt. Luke, and perverse) generation, How long shall I be with you? ere you be convinced: How long shall I suffer you? must I always bear with your infidelity? a reproof much more applicable to the scribes than to the disciples, whose wrong notions proceeded from weakness of capacity, rather than from perverseness of disposition. At the same time, that he might anew demonstrate the greatness of his power before them all, and put the folly of the scribes in particular to shame, he ordered the youth to be brought to him: Bring him unto me* Luke says he spake to the father of the youth, *Bring thy son hither.* After having rebuked the scribes for their obstinacy, he turned and spake to the father of the youth, ordering him to bring him. But no sooner was he brought within sight of his deliverer, than the evil spirit, being as it were enraged, attacked him fiercely. Mark ix. 20. *And they brought him unto him; and when he saw him, (Luke, as he was yet coming) straightway the spirit (Luke, threw him down and) tare him, (wrought, convulsed him) and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming.* Doubtless Jesus could easily have prevented this attack. But he wisely permitted it, that the minds of the spectators might be impressed with a more lively notion of the young man's distress. It was for the same reason also, that he asked his father how long he had been in that deplorable condition. Mark ix. 21. *And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child* 22. *And oft-times it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters to destroy him.* (See Matt. ver. 15.) *But if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us* The afflicted father greatly discouraged by the inability of our Lord's disciples, and dispirited by the sight of his son's misery, and by the remembrance of its long continuance, was afraid this possession might surpass the power even of Jesus himself, as the scribes affirmed, and so could not help expressing his doubts and fears. Wherefore, to make him sensible of his mistake, Mark ix. 23. *Jesus said unto him, in allusion to the expressions of diffidence which he had uttered, \* If thou canst believe, all things are possible*

\* Ver. 23. *If thou canst believe.*] As Christ's miracles were the proofs of his mission, it may seem strange that on this and several other occasions (see on Matt. ix. 28. § 36.) before he would work the desired miracles, he required the subjects of them to believe on him. Perhaps these were the reasons:



*He to him that believeth.* The father hearing this, cried out with tears that he believed, and besought Jesus to supply, by his goodness and pity, whatever deficiency he might find in his faith. *Mark ix. 24. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief.* But the vehemence with which he spake, occasioned by the greatness of his grief, bringing the crowd about them, Jesus, to prevent farther disturbance, immediately ordered the unclean spirit to depart from the youth, and never trouble him more. *Mark, 25. When*

reasons: 1. His enemies frequently desired to see signs or miracles, feigning a disposition to believe, *Matt. xvi. 1.* But the persons they brought to be cured, and the signs they demanded, being generally such as they hoped would prove superior to his power, their true intention was, that failing in the attempt he should expose himself. For Jesus therefore to have wrought miracles in such circumstances, would have served scarce any purpose, unless it was to gratify the unreasonable curiosity of his enemies, or rather their malignant disposition; a conduct which instead of convincing, must have enraged them, and prompted them to contrive some more speedy method of destroying him. We know Lazarus's resurrection had this effect, which is an incontestible demonstration, that the obstinacy of Christ's enemies was not to be overcome by any evidences, how clear or strong soever. And therefore he wisely avoided performing miracles before this sort of persons, who could not be profited by them; as for instance in his own country, *where he did not many mighty works because of their unbelief, Matt. xiii. 58.* For the same reason, when any one came to him begging miraculous cures, whether for himself or for others, it was very proper to ask if the cure was sought to gratify a vain curiosity, and with secret hopes that Jesus would fail in the attempt; or from a real persuasion that he was able to perform it. Our Lord, it is true, was intimately acquainted with the thoughts and intentions of all men, and so had no need to put this question for his own information. But he did it to signify, that he would not work miracles merely to gratify the evil dispositions of unreasonable men. 2. It should be considered, that while the secular power did not interpose its authority to support the credit of our Lord's miracles, the more universally the faith of them prevailed in the country where, and at the time when they were wrought, the greater must their evidence be to us in after times. Because such a general persuasion demonstrates, that our Lord's miracles were publicly performed, that many persons were present at them, that the eye-witnesses entertained no doubt of them, and that they related them to others, who giving credit to their testimony, believed them to be real. In this view of the matter, it concerns us not a little to know the opinion which our Lord's countrymen entertained of him and of his works. We may therefore justly suppose, that one of the reasons of his asking those who came to him if they believed he was able to perform the cures they solicited, might be to make us who live in after times sensible how far the reports of his miracles were spread, how firmly they were believed, how great the number of those were who believed them, and how highly he himself was revered on account of them. This observation shews the wisdom and propriety of the expressions which our Lord often made use of in conferring his miraculous cures. *Matt. viii. 13. As thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. Matt. ix. 24. Thy faith hath made thee whole. Luke viii. 50. Believe only, and she shall be made whole. Luke xviii. 42. Thy faith hath saved thee.* For the cures following, leave us no room to suspect, that the declarations which they gave of their faith in his miracles were feigned or doubtful.



25. *When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, (Matt. the devil) saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, who didst not obey my disciples, I charge thee: it is I who now give the command, Come out of him, and enter no more into him.* Scarcely was the word said, when the devil came out of the youth, making a hideous howling, and convulsing him to such a degree that he lay senseless, and without motion, as one dead, till Jesus took him by the hand, instantly brought him to life, and then delivered him to his father perfectly recovered. Mark ix. 26. *And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him; and he was as one dead, in so much that many said, He is dead.* 27. *But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up, and he arose.* Matt. xvii. 18. *And the child was cured from that very hour, ἀπὸ τῆς ὥρας αὐτῆς, from that time forth.* Luke ix. 42. *And he delivered him again to his father, in perfect health.*

It is remarkable, that on this occasion the nine disciples remained quite silent before the multitude. They were ashamed, perhaps, and vexed, lest through some fault of their own they had lost the power of miracles formerly conferred on them. But when they came with Jesus to their lodging, they asked the reason why they could not cast out that particular demon. Mark ix. 28. *And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out?* Matt. xvii. 20. *And Jesus said unto them, \* Because of your unbelief.* Knowing that you doubted whether I was able to make you cast out this devil, I ordered it so, that he would not go out at your command, for a reproof of the weakness of your faith. It seems the disciples had attempted to cast him out. In the mean time, to encourage them, Jesus described the efficacy of the faith of miracles.

\* Ver. 20. *Because of your unbelief*] It seems the persons on whom the power of miracles was bestowed, were obliged to have faith likewise, in order to the exercise of that power. But it was a different kind of faith from that which was necessary in the subjects of the miracles. For it consisted, First, in a just and high notion of the divine power, by which the miracle was to be effected. Secondly, in a firm persuasion that the miracle was to be wrought at that particular time. Now this persuasion was to spring from a twofold source. 1. A consciousness of the power which Christ had conferred on them when he ordained them his apostles. 2. It was to arise from a sensible impression made upon their minds by the spirit, signifying to them that a miracle was to be performed at that time. Accordingly the apostles, and such of the first Christians as were afterwards honoured with the power of miracles, never attempted to exercise it without feeling an impression of this kind, as is plain from Paul's leaving Trophimus at Miletum sick. Wherefore as the nine had in all probability essayed to cure the youth above mentioned, before the impression came, or had made the attempt with a degree of timidity, it was no wonder that they were unsuccessful.



cles. *For verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, \* Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove, and nothing shall be impossible unto you.* If ye have but the least degree of the faith of miracles, ye may say to the vast mountain from whence, ye just now came down, Move thyself and go to some other place, and it shall obey you. Ye shall by that faith be able to accomplish the most difficult things, in all cases where the glory of God, and the good of his church are concerned. Matt. xvii. 21. *Howbeit this kind (of demon) goeth not out but by † prayer and fasting;* that is, an eminent degree of the faith he had been describing.

Mark ix. 30. *And they departed thence.* They left the country of Cæsarea Philippi, and passed through Galilee. Luke ix. 43. *And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God.* All the disciples were amazed when they considered the greatness of the power which Jesus shewed in his last miracle. It would seem, that their wonder was accompanied with proportionably high expectations of happiness, in that temporal kingdom, which they were now convinced he could easily erect. Jesus knowing this, thought fit, when they came into Galilee, the country where he had the greatest following, to moderate his disciples ambition, by predicting his own sufferings. *But while they wondered every one at all things which Jesus did, (Matt. while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them) he said unto his disciples, 44. Let these things sink down into your ears; for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men.* Mark says, verse 30. *When he went away and passed through Galilee, he would not that any man should know it.* He departed privately without informing the multitude where he was going, and when he came into Galilee, he did not appear in public. 31. *For he taught his disciples*

\* Ver. 20. *Remove hence.*] *To remove mountains* is a proverbial expression, which signifies the doing of things seemingly impossible, as may be gathered from Zech. iv. 7. In this description of the efficacy of faith, there is a beautiful contrast between the smallness of the grain of mustard seed to which their faith is compared, and the hugeness of the mountain that was to be removed thereby.

† Ver. 21. *Prayer and fasting.*] Prayer and fasting could have no relation to the ejection of demons, but in so far as they had a tendency to increase the faith of miracles in him who had that power formerly conferred upon him. For example, prayer, by impressing a man's mind with a more intimate sense that all things whatsoever depend upon the infinite and incomprehensible power of God, raises his idea of that power to a greater sublimity than can be done in the way of ordinary speculation. And as for fasting, by weakening the animal life, it subdues such passions as are nourished by a continual repletion of body. Hence fasting has a tendency to free the mind from the domination of passion, which never fails to occasion a great inward perturbation, and at times is found to make even the best men inattentive, at least to the more silent impressions of God's Spirit. Fasting therefore produces an inward quietness and calmness very favourable to the growth of faith.



ples and said unto them, *The Son of man is delivered, παραδίδεται* (Mat. SHALL be betrayed, παραδίδεται) and they shall kill him, and after that he is killed, he shall rise (Mat. he shall be raised again) the third day. Our Lord now found it necessary for the reason just now mentioned, to moderate the high admiration which his disciples were apt to entertain of him, on account of this, and the other extraordinary things that had lately happened. Wherefore he not only concealed himself for a while, by forbearing to preach and work miracles as he returned through Galilee, but he predicted a third time his own sufferings and death. Luke ix. 45. *But they understood not this saying*: they could not comprehend how he who was to abide on earth for ever, and was come to deliver others from the universal destroyer, could himself fall under his stroke. *And it was hid from them*, namely by their own prejudices and misconceptions concerning Messiah, *that they perceived it not*. For seeing he spake of rising again the third day, they were not able to divine any reason for his dying at all, being ignorant as yet of the nature and ends of his death. *And they feared to ask him of that saying*. Matt. xviii. 23. *And they were exceeding sorry*: taking no comfort from the mention that was made of his resurrection, the prediction made them very sorry, and raised such fears in their minds, that they durst not ask him to explain it; especially as they remembered that he had often inculcated it, and had reprimanded Peter for being unwilling to hear it.

§ LXXIV. *The didrachmas are paid in Capernaum. The disciples are reproved for contending about the chief posts in the kingdom. See § 106. 130. Of the evil and punishment of offences. See § 97. The parable of the lost sheep, delivered the first time. See § 94. The forgiveness of injuries is enjoined. The parable of the servant-debtors. Matth. xvii. 24,—26. xviii. 1,—35. Mark ix. 33,—50. Luke ix. 46,—50.*

AFTER these things, Jesus came to Capernaum, the place of his ordinary residence. But he was no sooner arrived, than the receivers of the \* tax called didrachma, a sum equal to half a shekel, or fifteen pence of our money, came to Peter, and asked him, whether his master would pay that tribute. Mark ix. 33. *And*

† Tax called didrachma.] Most commentators think this was the half shekel raised for the service and reparation of the temple, from all the Jewish males above twenty years old, and which Vespasian afterwards obliged them to pay to the Capitol at Rome. But Beza is of opinion, that it was the poll tax levied by the Romans, after Judea was reduced into the form of a province, (see on Matt. xxii. 17. § 17.) and which Agrippa Major in the reign of Claudius remitted to the Jews. If it was this tribute which the collectors demanded of Peter, the import of their question was this; Is your Master of the sect of Judas of Galilee, whose opinion is, that taxes should be paid to no foreign power?



*And he came to Capernaum. Matt. xvii. 24. And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute money (οἱ τὰ δίδραχμα λαμβάνοντες) came to Peter, and said, Dost not your Master pay tribute? They demanded the tribute for Jesus from Peter, either because the house in which Jesus lived was his, or because they observed him to be of a more forward disposition than the rest, or because none of them were with him at that time but Peter. 25. He saith, Yes. Peter told the collectors that his Master would pay the tribute, and consequently made a sort of promise to procure it for them. Yet when he considered the matter more maturely, he was afraid to speak to the Messiah concerning his paying taxes on any pretence whatsoever. In the mean time, Jesus knowing both what had happened, and what Peter was thinking, saved him the pain of introducing the discourse. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute—of their own children, or of strangers? 26. Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free: insinuating, that because he was himself the Son of the great King, to whom heaven, earth and sea, with all things in them belong, he was not obliged to pay tribute, as holding any thing by a derived right from any king whatever. Or if, as is more probable, the contribution was made for the service and reparation of the temple, his meaning was, that being the Son of him to whom the tribute was paid, he could justly have excused himself. Nevertheless, that he might not give offence, he \* sent Peter to the lake, with a line and a hook, telling him, that in the mouth of the first fish that came up, he should find a Grecian piece of money, called a stater, equal in value to four drachmas, or one shekel of Jewish money, the sum required for them two. Matt. xvii. 27. Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find (σαρκα, a stater) a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.*

Our Lord's late prediction concerning his sufferings (§ 73.) had made the disciples exceeding sorry. But their grief soon went off,

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off,

\* Sent Peter to the lake.] Jesus chose to provide the tribute money by miracle, either because the disciple who carried the bag was absent, or because he had not as much money as was necessary. Farther, he chose to provide it by this particular miracle rather than any other, because it was of such a kind as to demonstrate, that he was the Son of the Great Monarch worshipped in the temple, and who rules the universe. Wherefore, in the very manner of his paying this tax, he shewed Peter that he was free from all taxes; and at the same time gave his followers this useful lesson, that in matters which affect their property in a smaller degree, it is better to recede somewhat from their just rights, than by stubbornly insisting on them, to offend their brethren, or disturb the state.



off, or their ignorance quickly gat the better of it ; for in a day or two after that, as they were travelling into Capernaum, some of them forming a separate company, fell a disputing about the chief posts of honour and profit in their Master's kingdom. Luke ix. 46. \* *Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be the greatest.* Εισηλθὶ δὲ διαλογισμός : *Now there had arisen a dispute ;* namely, as they went into Capernaum, as is plain from Mark, ver. 33, 34. This debate Jesus overheard ; and though he said nothing to them at the time, yet after the receivers of the didrachmas were gone, he did not fail to ask them, what it was they had been contending about on the road. Mark ix. 33. *And being in the house, he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way ?* 34. *But they held their peace ; for by the way they had disputed among themselves who should be the greatest :* they were at the first silent, not caring to discover the matter to him. Wherefore sitting down, and bidding them all stand round him and attend, he said, If any man desires to be the greatest person in my kingdom, let him endeavour to obtain that dignity, by preferring others in honour, and by doing them all the good he can. This he said to insinuate, that in his kingdom they who are most humble and modest, and zealous in doing good, shall be acknowledged as the greatest persons. Mark ix. 35. *And he sat down and called the twelve, and said unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all.* When the disciples heard these words, they immediately perceived that Jesus knew what had happened, and that it was needless to attempt concealing the matter ; for which reason they drew near, as Matthew informs us, and desired him to decide the point in dispute among them. Matt. xviii. 1. *At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven ?* To check these foolish emulations, Jesus called a little child, and having set

\* Luke 46. *Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be the greatest.*] As this dispute happened immediately after Jesus foretold his own sufferings and resurrection, some imagine that by *his sufferings*, the disciples understood certain great difficulties, which their Master was to meet with before he gat his kingdom established ; and by *his resurrection from the dead*, his surmounting these difficulties. However, the circumstance mentioned by Matthew, viz. that the prediction made them exceedingly sorry, does not seem to agree so well with that supposition, unless the thought of his meeting with any opposition at all grieved them, even though they were sure he would surmount it.

According to Luke's representation in our version, this dispute happened at the time that Jesus rebuked his disciples for it. ix. 46. *Then there arose a reasoning among them, which should be the greatest.* But, Mark ix. 33. we are expressly told that it happened as they went into Capernaum. The evangelists may be reconciled by the translation of Luke's words suggested in the paraphrase, Εισηλθὶ δὲ διαλογισμός ἐν αὐτοῖς : *Now there had arisen a dispute among them, viz. as they travelled into Capernaum.*



set him in the \* midst, that they might consider him attentively, he shewed them by the sweetness, docility, and modesty visible in its countenance, what the temper and dispositions of his disciples ought to be, and how dear to him persons of such dispositions are, though otherwise weak and infirm. Matt. xviii. 2. † *And Jesus* (Luke, *perceiving the thought of their heart*, the dispositions by which they were animated) *called a little child unto him, and set him* (Luke, *by him*) *in the midst of them.* 3. *And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven: so far shall ye be from becoming the greatest in my kingdom, that ye shall not so much as enter into it at all, unless ye be like little children, free from pride, covetousness, and ambition, and resemble them in humility, sincerity, docility, and in disengagement of affection from the things of the present life, which fire the ambition of grown men. But he inculcated humility more especially by this argument, that it leads one directly to that greatness which the disciples were ignorantly aspiring after.* Matt. xviii. 4. *Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven: whosoever rests satisfied with the province which God has assigned him, whatever it may be, and meekly receives all the divine instructions, though contrary to his own inclinations, and prefers others in honour, such a person is really the greatest in my kingdom.* Next, to shew how acceptable a grace humility is, he took the child up in his arms, and declared that kindness shewed to such as humbled themselves like little children, is in reality kindness shewed to him, especially if it be done out of obedience to his command. Luke ix. 48. *And* (Mark, *when he had taken him in his arms; he*) *said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child, (Matt. one such little child; Mark, one of such children) in my name: whosoever sheweth kindness even to the least of my disciples, whosoever encourages and assists such because he belongs to me, receiveth me. And whosoever shall receive me, receiveth*

\* This method of instruction was agreeable to the manner of the eastern doctors and prophets, who in teaching, impressed the minds of their disciples by symbolical actions as well as by words. Thus, John xx. 22. Jesus by breathing on his apostles, signified, that through the invisible energy of his power, he conferred on them the gifts of his spirit. Thus also, John xxi. 19. he bade Peter follow him, to shew that he was to be his follower in afflictions. And, Rev. xviii. 21. an angel casts a great stone into the sea, to signify the utter destruction of Babylon. For more examples, see John xiii. 4. 5. 14. Acts xxi. 11.

† Ver. 2. *And Jesus called a little child.*] Luke expresses it thus, 47. *And Jesus perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child.* His perceiving their thought, does not relate to the dispute which happened some hours before, and which they had sufficiently declared in their question, but it relates to their present frame. He knew that each of them ardently wished to be the greatest in his kingdom, and proposed to cure their ambition:



*ceiveth* (Mark, *not me, but*) *him that sent me, for he that is least among you all, in respect of humbling himself to do good offices, the same shall be great.* In this manner did Jesus recommend to his followers, a perpetual spiritual infancy, consisting in an holy simplicity, meek docility, and unfeigned humility.

On a former occasion, Simon Peter had gotten his particular dignity secured to him; Jesus having promised him the keys of the kingdom, by which, without doubt, they all understood the place of high steward. Probably, therefore, he was not engaged in this debate. But James and John, the sons of Zebedee, might be principally concerned in it, contending with our Lord's blood relations, James the Less, and Judas surnamed Thaddeus, and Simon Zelotes, (see § 37.) who no doubt thought their consanguinity to Christ entitled them to the most honourable and profitable offices in his kingdom next to Peter. Whereas the sons of Zebedee claimed them, on account of their intimacy with Jesus, and the qualifications for which they were named *Sons of thunder*. Accordingly we find the two brothers afterwards asking the favour of the chief posts from Christ himself, § 106. This discourse therefore concerning humility, would be considered by Zebedee's sons as particularly designed for them; which I suppose was the reason that John, desiring to divert it, told his Master they had seen one casting out devils in his name, and had forbidden him, because he did not follow with them. Luke ix. 49. *And John answered* (Mark, *him*) *and said, Master, \* we saw one casting out devils in thy name, (Mark, and he followeth not us) and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us.* Mark ix. 39. *But Jesus said, (Luke, unto him) Forbid him not, for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me:* be the person who he will, he must have an high notion of my power, since he sees the devils go out at mentioning my name. Besides, (Mark 40. *For*) *he that is not against*

\* Ver. 49. *We saw one casting out devils.*] The Doctors Whitby and Clarke are of opinion, that this was one of the Baptist's disciples, who, though he did not follow Christ with the rest, had been taught by his Master to acknowledge him as the Messiah, and entertained so great a veneration for him, that he attempted to cast out devils in his name. Or if the character given of this person, *He followeth not with us*, and the apostle's prohibition, *We forbade him*, are thought inconsistent with the opinion of the doctors mentioned, we may suppose that he was an exorcist like the seven sons of Sceva, (Acts xix. 13.) who having seen the miracles which the apostles had performed in their master's name, while out on their first mission, thought there might be some great occult virtue in it, and so made use of it in his exorcisms as Sceva's sons did in theirs, but with better success; God permitting him to cast out devils in Christ's name, to clothe his son with the greater honour. Or the devils may have obeyed the commands of persons, who without Christ's commission made use of his name, out of malice to him, and in hopes of bringing reproach on him through their misconduct. Nor is Christ's answer to John, ver. 39. inconsistent with these suppositions.



*against us is on our part : (Luke, is for us) you should confider, that in the present circumstances, every one who does not oppose and persecute us is a friend ; and that the ejection of demons in my name, will advance my reputation and promote my interest, although those who cast them out should have no intention to do either, nay, though the devils which are cast out should intend the contrary. Farther, to shew the apostles that they had been in the wrong to discourage this person, who must have entertained a great veneration for their Master, and was in a fair way to become his follower, he told them, that the lowest degree of respect which any one shewed him, though it was but the giving a cup of cold water to his thirsty disciple, is acceptable to him, and shall not lose its reward. Mark ix. 41. For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward. See on Matt. x. 42. § 40. Whereas, on the other hand, the least discouragement of his servants in their duty, come from what quarter it will, shall be severely punished. 42. And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, καὶ ὁ σκανδαλίσας, whosoever shall make one of these little ones to stumble, so the Greek word properly signifies, whosoever shall tempt them to sin, it is better for him that a mill-stone were banged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea. (Luke, drowned in the depth of the sea.) See on Luke xvii. 2. § 97. Hence he inferred, that it is better to deny one's self the greatest earthly satisfactions, and to part with every thing most precious, represented by the figures of an hand, a foot, an eye, than by these things to cause the weakest of his friends to stumble, 'as some of the disciples had lately done. The amputation of our hands and feet, and the digging out of our eyes when they cause us to offend, import also that we should deny ourselves such use of our senses and members as may lead us into sin. Thus the hand and the eye are to be turned away from those alluring objects which raise in us lust and ambition. The foot must be restrained from carrying us into evil company, unlawful diversions, and forbidden pleasures. Nor can we complain of these injunctions as severe, since by tempting others to sin, as well as by sinning ourselves, we are exposed to the eternal punishments of hell. Matt. xviii. 7. Wo unto the world because of offences, for it must needs be that offences come : (τὰ σκανδαλα, temptations to sin, stumbling-blocks) But wo to that man by whom the offence cometh. Mark ix. 43. And (Matt. Wherefore) if thy hand offend thee, cut it off ; it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched. 44. Where \* their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. 45. And*

\* Ver. 44. *Their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.*] These expressions



45. *And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off:* (see the explication of these metaphorical precepts, on Matt. v. 30. § 26.) *it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched.* 46. *Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.* 47. *And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out:* (Matt. and cast it from thee) *it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God (Matt. into life) with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire.* 48. *Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.* The most superficial reader must be sensible, that our Lord's repeating so frequently his declaration concerning the duration of future punishments, has in it something very awful, and implies that mankind should attend to it as a matter of infinite importance to them. It likewise affords a lesson to all the ministers of the gospel, directing them to enforce the precepts of religion which they inculcate, by frequently and earnestly holding forth to the view of their hearers, the terrors of a future judgment. Mark ix. 49. *For every one shall be*  
*\* salted with fire, (πας γαρ πυρ αλισθησεται: every one shall be salt-*  
*ed*

pressions seem to be borrowed from Isa. lxvi. 24. *And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me, for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorring to all flesh.* In this passage, the prophet is describing the miserable end of hardened sinners, by a similitude taken from the behaviour of conquerors, who, after having gained the battle, and beaten the enemy out of the field, go forth to view the slain. Thus at the last day, the devil, with all his adherents, being finally and completely vanquished, the saints shall go forth to view them doomed by the just judgment of God to eternal death. And this their punishment is represented by two metaphors, drawn from the different ways of burying the dead, in use among the Jews. Bodies of men interred in the earth, are eaten up of worms which die when their food faileth; and those that are burned, are consumed in fire which extinguishes itself, when there is no more fuel added to feed it. But it shall not be so with the wicked; their worm shall not die, and their fire shall not be quenched. These metaphors therefore, as they are used by our Lord, and by the prophet Isaiah, paint the eternal punishments of the damned in strong and lively colours.

\* Ver. 49. *Salted with fire.*] The proper translation of this passage, is, *Every one shall be salted for the fire*, namely, by you my apostles: for *πυρ* here is the dative, not the ablative; as it is likewise 2 Pet. iii. 7. where the same construction is found: *πυρ ενεμυσαι, reserved for the fire.* Every one shall be salted for the fire of God's altar, i. e. shall be prepared to be offered a sacrifice to God, holy and acceptable. For though the proposition be universal, it must be limited by the nature of the subject thus: Every one who is offered a sacrifice unto God, shall be salted for the fire as every sacrifice is salted with salt. Nor is it any objection against this interpretation, that the word *αλισθησεται* will thus stand construed with different cases in the same sentence. For both sacred and profane writers make use of such constructions. Nay, they often affix different senses to the same word in one sentence. Thus, James iv. 8. "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you." But the reader will have no doubt of the meaning of the passage, when he considers that our Lord is not giving a reason  
for



*ed for the fire of God's altar ; salted by you with piety, in order to be offered to God), and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt. Mark ix. 50. Salt is good, but if the salt have lost his saltiness, wherewith will ye season it ? Have salt in yourselves. The argument stands thus : That ye my apostles do mortify yourselves is absolutely necessary, not only on account of your own future well-being, but for the sake of mankind who are to be salted by you for the fire ; that is, seasoned with piety and virtue by means of your doctrine and example, and so put in a fit condition for being offered unto God, in opposition to the condition of the wicked, who being an abhorring unto all flesh, must be consumed by the worm that never dies, and the fire that is not quenched. The necessity of mens being thus seasoned with grace, in order to their becoming acceptable sacrifices unto God, you may learn from its being typically represented under the law, by the priests salting the sacrifices for the fire of the altar with salt. Having therefore this high honour of salting mankind for the altar of heaven conferred on you, it is fit that ye contain in yourselves the spiritual salt of all the graces, and particularly the holy salt of love, and peace, in order that you may be as much as possible free from the rottenness of ambition, and pride, and contention, and every evil work. Mark ix. 50. Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another.*

But because pride, or an high opinion of one's self, with a contempt of others, is often the parent of offences, he solemnly cautioned his disciples against that evil, and shewed them the unreasonableness of it by this delightful argument, that the poorest person is an object of the care of providence. Matt. xviii. 10. *Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones ; one who is converted and become as a little child, one of my real disciples of whom I have been speaking to you : for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven. 11. For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.* Our Lord did not mean that every particular saint has a guardian angel assigned him. But as all the angels are sent forth, ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation, they may in general be called *their angels*. The expression *behold the face of my Father*, alludes to the custom of earthly courts, where the great men, those who are highest in office and favour, are most frequently in the prince's palace and presence. Wherefore, when

for the unquenchableness of hell fire as is commonly supposed, but a reason why his apostles should cut off their hands and dig out their eyes, if these members proved the occasions of sin, either to themselves or others. This I think is plain from the clause that follows : *if the salt have lost his saltiness, if you who are the salt of the earth, and whose office it is to salt others, have lost your saltiness, i. e. your grace and goodness, wherewith will ye season it ? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another.*



when we are told that the angels of the least of Christ's disciples behold the face of God, the meaning is, that the chief angels are employed in taking care of such; and our Lord's reasoning is both strong and beautiful, when on this account he cautions us against despising them. To conclude, by telling them that *the Son of man was come to seek and save that which was lost*, and by delivering the parable of the lost sheep, which its owner found after much painful searching, he hath eminently displayed the immense care which the Father almighty takes of men, and hath given us a just notion of the value which he puts on the least of his reasonable creatures. He gives his highest angels charge concerning them, has sent his only begotten Son to save them, and condescends to share in the joy which the heavenly beings are filled with upon their recovery. Matt. xviii. 12. *How think ye? If a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? 13. And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, He rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray. 14. Even so, it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.* He greatly delights in the conversion and salvation of men, and is at as much pains to reclaim them, as a shepherd is to bring back a sheep that is strayed from his flock.

Having thus spoken to the persons offending, he addressed his discourse to the persons offended, shewing them in what manner they ought to behave towards an offending brother. First of all, his fault is to be represented unto him privately, in order that he be brought to a due sense of it. Matt. xviii. 15. *Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother:* hast recovered him to God, who rejoices at the repentance of a sinner, and to thyself, with whom he was at enmity; and so hast saved him from perishing. But if this gentle method has not the desired effect, two or more grave persons should concur in the rebuke, that he may be convinced he is in the wrong. 16 *But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses, every word may be established.* If he still remains obstinate, his offence is to be told to the church, or the particular congregation of the faithful to which he belongs, whose sentence being declared, will shew him, that in the judgment of all good men the other has done his duty, and that he is to blame. 17. *And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it to the church.* Lastly, if this does not make an impression upon him, he is from that time forth to be treated as the Pharisees treated heathens and publicans; that is to say, he must be considered as an incorrigible sinner,



sinner, whose company and conversation being contagious, ought to be shunned by all who have any love of goodness; *but if he neglect to bear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican*. Next, Jesus conferred on his disciples in general, the power of binding and loosing, which he had formerly honoured Peter with singly: (§ 70.) Matt. xviii. 18. *Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.* In the former grant, the power of binding and loosing had respect to nothing but doctrine. Whatever Peter declared lawful and unlawful, should be held so by heaven; whereas here it relates not to doctrine only, but to discipline also. If by their admonitions, whether public or private, the apostles brought their brethren to repentance, they loosed the guilt of their sins, the fetters by which the divine justice detains men its prisoners; or, as it is expressed in the precedent verse, *they gained their brethren*, i. e. saved them from perishing. On the other hand, if the offending brother continued impenitent, after the methods prescribed were all tried, they bound his guilt the faster upon him, because, according to the laws of heaven, the terms of salvation which they were to preach by inspiration, none but penitents shall obtain pardon. Farther, to encourage good men to be very earnest in their endeavours to bring sinners to repentance, he assured them, that if they prayed to God for it he would hear them, provided it was agreeable to the wise ends of his providence. Matt. xviii. 19. *Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth, as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.* 20. *For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them:* I am in the midst of them by my especial favour and presence. For observing that in those religious assemblies they act as the duty which they owe to me directs, I will intercede with my Father for them, and procure them from him a gracious answer to their prayers. Such are the rules which our Lord would have us to observe in matters of private offence. Private admonition must be used before the correction becomes more public. But in public offences the case is different. The correction of such, even in the first instances, must be public like the offences themselves, that the scandal occasioned by them may be removed. And in this sense we are to understand the apostle's direction to Timothy, 1 Epist. v. 20. "Them that sin, rebuke before all, that others also may fear."

Jesus, in his discourse of private offences, had, it seems, said something about the number of times these were to be forgiven; probably that which Luke has recorded on another occasion. Chap. xvii. 3. "If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him, and if he repent, forgive him. 4. And if he trespass against



thee seven times in a day," he did not mean the same, but different trespasses, as is evident from the following clause, in which the trespassing brother's repentance is mentioned, "and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent, thou shalt forgive him." For Peter having heard the doctrine of frequent forgiveness thus peremptorily inculcated, imagined it might be of dangerous consequence to society. He therefore took upon him to object against it. Matt. xviii. 21. *Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?* In these questions Peter expressed great surprise, at being ordered to forgive till seven times those who injured him. His Master replied, that when he ordered injuries to be forgiven till they came to the length of seven, he did not mean precisely that number, but that the pardon must be repeated as often as the injury. 22. *Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee till seven times, but until seventy times seven.* This excellent morality he illustrated by the parable of the two servants, debtors to one lord, in which is showed the necessity of forgiving the greatest injuries, in every case where the offending party is sensible of his fault, and promises amendment, a necessity of the strongest kind, arising from this law of the divine government, That it is the condition upon which God forgives our offences against him. 23. *Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants:* because I order you to forgive all who repent of the injuries they have done you, therefore the method in which you are to be treated by me at the last day, if you refuse forgiveness, may be represented by the behaviour of a certain king towards his servants, when he took account of them. 24. *And when he had begun to reckon, or inspect their accounts, one was brought unto him, probably his steward or treasurer, who having had the management of his revenue, owed him no less than ten thousand talents;* that is, upwards of one million eight hundred and seventy thousand pounds Sterling, and who, upon inquiry, was found to have nothing. Wherefore, as it plainly appeared, by his having run through such vast sums, that he had been both negligent and extravagant, his Lord ordered the law to be executed against him. (See Lev. xxv. 39. 2 Kings iv. 1. Neh. v. 5. Isa. l. 1.) Matt. xviii. 25. *But for as much as he had not to pay, his Lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.* Not that the value of him, and his family, and effects, was any way equal to the debt, but as a punishment of his wickedness. For on any other supposition, it is hard to conceive how his Lord, whose humanity and goodness was so great, came to take such a rigorous measure; especially as the advantage accruing to himself therefrom, must have been but a trifle in comparison of his loss.



los. The steward being thus put in mind of his debt, and threatened with the execution of the law, durst neither deny it nor make light of it, as many do who are admonished with respect to their sins. For the accounts were at hand, and the officers had laid hold on him to bind him, ver. 27. In great perplexity, therefore, he fell down on the ground, and besought his lord with many tears to have patience, promising to pay the whole debt. 26. *The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.* The confusion he was in made him say this without consideration; for the debt which he owed was a sum by far too great for one advanced in years, as he was, and who had nothing, ever to think of acquiring. However, his lord being of an exceeding generous and merciful disposition, was touched with his distress, had compassion on him, and ordered him to be loosed. 27. *Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt,* that is, did not insist on present payment, for he afterwards exacted the debt, ver. 34. 28. *But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow-servants which owed him an hundred pence; and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.* The Roman penny, or denarius, which is here spoken of, being in value about sevenpence-halfpenny of our money, the whole sum that was due to him did not much exceed three pounds Sterling. Therefore, his craving this trifle in so rough a manner, immediately on coming out of the palace, where so much lenity had been shewed to him in a matter of far greater importance, manifested the very basest disposition in the man. 29. *And his fellow servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.* Though this poor man's creditor was a fellow-servant, and consequently no more than his equal in rank, he humbly fell down at his feet, and with the same earnestness entreated him as he had done his lord, making him a promise, which there was not only a possibility, but a probability of his performing. *I will pay thee all.* Nevertheless the other, forgetting the much greater mercy that had been shewed to himself so lately, in the like circumstances, by their common master, was insolent and inexorable, and would not wait a moment. He went immediately, and cast the man into prison. 30. *And he would not, but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.* Such inhumanity in such circumstances, and from such a man, afflicted all his fellow-servants exceedingly. So they came and told it to their lord. So when his fellow-servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told their lord all that was done. 32. *Then his lord, after he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, the vast sums thou owedst*

me,



me, *because thou desiredst me* : I forgave thee because thou acknowledgedst the debt, fell down at my feet, and humbly beggedst me to have patience, promising to pay me. Matt. xviii. 33. *Shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant ?* who likewise acknowledged his debt, and promised payment, shewing thee in his supplication, though thine equal, as much respect as thou shewedst to me, thy lord and king. Thou shouldst therefore have had compassion on him, *even as I had pity on thee.* 34. *And his lord was wroth, was exceedingly enraged, and \* delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him* : He ordered him to be tortured till he should make payment of the whole debt.

In this parable, which may be considered as our Lord's explanation of the fifth petition of his own prayer, there are three things set in opposition ; namely, the lord to his servant, an immense sum to a trifle, and the most extraordinary clemency to the greatest cruelty. The application of the parable therefore is easy, and fit to overturn all the arguments whereby evil minds justify revenge ; particularly those that are taken from the nature and number of the offences committed, or from the dignity of the persons against whom they are committed, or from the benefits conferred on the persons who commit them. For, in the first place, what are men compared with God ? In the second place, how great sums do each of us owe to him ? In the third place, how trifling are the offences which our brethren commit against us, perhaps through inadvertency, or in consequence of some provocation received from us ? Most unworthy, therefore, of the divine mercy are weak mortals, who, notwithstanding they are themselves

\* Ver. 34. *Delivered him. &c.*] This at first sight may seem an improper method of obtaining payment in such circumstances. Yet when it is considered, that the man's behaviour to his fellow servant shewed him to be a wretch not only of the most barbarous dispositions, but extremely covetous. his lord had reason to suspect that he had secreted his money and goods, especially as nothing appeared in his possession. Wherefore he wisely ordered him to be tortured on the rack, till he should discover with whom they were lodged, and make complete payment. Besides it may be considered in the light of a punishment incomparably heavier than that which was to have been inflicted on him purely for his insolvency. For though the debt was immense, yet whilst it appeared to have been contracted, not by fraud, but by extravagance and bad management, he was only to be sold with his family for a certain term of years, that payment might be made as far as their price would go. But now that he added to his former misbehaviour, covetousness and unmercifulness in the exaction of a trifling debt from a fellow-servant to whom he ought to have been more indulgent for the sake of their common lord, who had been so kind to him, there was all the reason in the world to suspect, that in his lord's affairs he was more fraudulent than negligent. For which cause he was delivered to the tormentors, to be punished in the manner his crimes deserved ; than which, a stronger representation of God's displeasure against men of unmerciful, unforgiving, and revengeful dispositions cannot be set forth, or even conceived by the utmost force of human imagination,



themselves weighed down with an infinite load of guilt, are implacable towards their fellow-men, and will not forgive them the smallest offences, although they have a due sense of them, and express their sorrow for them. Persons of this monstrous disposition, should seriously consider the conclusion and application of the parable in hand. 35. *So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts, that is, really, inwardly, and not in word or tongue only, forgive not every one, however great, or rich, or powerful you may be, his brother their trespasses* A most awful threatening, which ought to strike terror into men of fierce and implacable minds. For whatever they may think, it shall in its utmost extent be executed upon all who will not be persuaded by the consideration of the divine mercy, fully to forgive, not their fellow-servants merely, but their own brethren and God's children, such petty trespasses as they may happen to commit against them, but afterwards are sensible of their fault, make reparation, and promise amendment.

§ LXXV. *Jesus leaves Galilee, and goes up to Jerusalem to the fourth passover by the way of Perea.* Matt. xix. 1, 2. Mark x. 1.

AFTER delivering the parable of the servant debtors, our Lord went into Judea. Matt. xix. 1. *And it came to pass that when Jesus had finished these sayings, he departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judea beyond Jordan.* Properly speaking, no part of Judea was on the farther side of Jordan; for though after the Jews returned from the captivity, the whole of their land was called Judea, especially by foreigners who happened to mention their affairs, it is certain that in the gospels, Judea is always spoken of as a particular division of the country. We may therefore reasonably suppose that Matthew's expression, *καὶ ἦλθεν εἰς τὰ ὄρια τῆς Ἰουδαίας πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου*, is elliptical; and may supply it from Mark thus, *And came into the coasts of Judea, δια τοῦ πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου, through the country beyond Jordan.* For Mark says expressly, x. 1. *κακῆθεν ἀναστὰς ὑψίσται εἰς τὰ ὄρια τῆς Ἰουδαίας δια τοῦ πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου, And he arose from thence, and came into Judea by the farther side of Jordan,* by Perea, see on John ix. 39. § 84. In this journey, our Lord passed through the country beyond Jordan, that the Jews living there might enjoy the benefit of his doctrine and miracles. Matt. xix. 2. *And great multitudes followed him, namely from Galilee into Perea, and he healed them there.* Mark x. 1. *And the people resort unto him again, viz. the inhabitants of Perea, for Mark speaks of them chiefly, and as he was wont, he taught them again.* At this time our Lord seems to have travelled quickly through Perea in his way to Judea. For though the people now resorted to him in great crowds, we cannot from that circumstance infer that he staid long here,



here. His fame was become exceeding great, insomuch, that every where he was resorted to, and followed by the sick who wished to be healed, by their friends who attended them, by those whose curiosity prompted them to see and examine things so wonderful, by well disposed persons who found themselves greatly profited and pleased with his sermons, by enemies who watched all his words and actions with a design to expose him as a deceiver, lastly, by those who expected that he would set up the kingdom immediately. Besides, at this time the multitude may have been even greater than ordinary, because as the passover was at hand, many going thither may have chosen to travel in our Lord's train, expecting to see new miracles\*.

\* In the first chapter of the Talmudical tract called Shekalim, we have the following passage as it is cited by Lamy, Harm. vol. i. p. 207. *On the first day of the month Adar, a proclamation was made, requiring that the half shekel, which every Jew paid towards the service and reparation of the temple, should be provided. On the fourteenth day of the month, the collectors of this tribute sat in every city to receive it: but they did not as yet constrain person to make payment. On the twenty-fifth day, however, they sat in the temple, and then obliged them to pay, seizing on the goods of those who refused.* Adar being the last month of the Jewish ecclesiastical year, answering to our February and March, if the authority of the Talmud is acknowledged, the tribute was demanded from our Lord at Capernaum, about four weeks before the passover; for that feast was always celebrated on the fifteenth day of the first month. On this supposition, the journey which Matthew and Mark say Christ took into Judea, immediately after paying the tribute, must have been to the passover in the following month; not, however, to the passover at which he suffered, because we find him afterwards celebrating the feast of tabernacles and dedication. Besides, if the number and extent of the journies performed between the third passover and that at which our Lord suffered are considered, it will perhaps appear, that they could not all take place in the space of one year; and consequently, that a passover may have intervened, and that it was celebrated soon after the tribute was demanded, as the passage cited from the Talmud obliges us to believe. We can thus see the reason why the multitude accompanied our Lord into Judea at this time; they were going to the passover, and chose to travel along with him, in hopes of seeing new miracles. And though it should be granted, that they took their journey immediately after the tribute was paid, i. e. three weeks before the passover, it is no ways inconsistent with the hypothesis now offered, as the people commonly went up early to purify themselves, John xi. 55. It is true, the passovers in our Lord's public life will thus have been no fewer than five; but the arguments offered under the second preliminary observation, shew, that there may have been more passovers in his ministry, than the historians have thought fit to mention distinctly. It may seem an objection of more moment, that, according to this hypothesis, Matthew and Mark have omitted a whole year almost of Christ's public life, relating only a few things which happened before his passion. But we should consider, that the like blanks are to be found in other parts of their histories. Besides, Luke, who wrote before them, had given a large account of Christ's ministry during this interval, in the country beyond Jordan; not to mention that his sermons there were much the same with those he preached in Galilee, and which they had given an account of. John, whose principal design was to write the history of our Lord's transactions in Jerusalem, during



during the passovers and other feasts omitted by the precedent evangelists, relates what happened at the feasts of tabernacles and dedication this year; so that he brings down the history through the period which Luke had omitted. But if the reader, setting aside the authority of the Talmud, supposes that the tribute was demanded at Capernaum sooner in the year, and that all the journies which Jesus made since the third passover, together with those which follow to the close of the history, were performed in the space of twelve months, it will no ways affect the scheme of harmony laid down in this book, only the journey into Judea through Perea must in that case have been to the feast of tabernacles, and not to the passover, and consequently must be placed after John vii. 10. This is Sir Isaac Newton's scheme, who is of opinion, that the journey into Judea by Perea, brought our Lord up to the feast of tabernacles, and that this was his last departure from Galilee. The other scheme however I judge to be more natural and probable, for which reason I place the fourth passover here.

#### FOURTH PASSOVER.

It is probable that Jesus, after the celebration of this fourth passover, left Jerusalem and Judea as soon as possible, because the priests and great men were now become solicitous to have him killed. There is nothing said of him by any of the evangelists after this passover till the feast of tabernacles approached, where John takes up the history again, relating what happened at that feast, from ch. vii. 2. to ch. ix. 35. so that he has omitted the transactions of one whole year, viz. that which intervened between the third passover, before which the first miraculous dinner was given, where he drops the history, and the fourth passover, after which the feast of tabernacles happened, where he resumes it again. Luke gives an account of his transactions between the feast of tabernacles and dedication, mentioned by John, and particularly what happened in his journey to the feast of dedication, from ch. ix. 51. to ch. xi. 1. Here John's account of the feast of dedication comes in, ch. ix. 35. After that, Jesus went away into the country beyond Jordan, where he abode till he was called into Judea to visit Lazarus. The history of his ministry in this country Luke hath given from chap. xi. 1. to chap. xvii. 11. When our Lord was called into Judea to visit Lazarus, he left Perea, and taking the south of Galilee in his way, travelled through Samaria to Bethany. We have the history of that journey Luke xvii. 11,—20. After the resurrection of Lazarus, our Lord retired to Ephraim, John xi. 54. The transactions at Ephraim we have Luke xvii. 20, Matt. xix. 3. Mark x. 2. The reader will be pleased to take notice, that this is Sir Isaac Newton's scheme also; only he supposes that the transactions recorded Matt. xix. 3. &c. happened in Perea before the resurrection of Lazarus; whereas I imagine they were done at Ephraim, whither Christ retired after having performed that miracle. The three histories coincide again (Matt. xix. 13. Mark x. 13. Luke xvii. 15.) in the account of the little children, who were brought to Jesus at Ephraim to be blessed. But Matthew and Mark relate this immediately after their account of the journey which brought our Lord into Judea at the preceding passover, I mean, according to the scheme of harmony proposed in this book, omitting the intermediate events, because Luke had given the history of them. Accordingly, the transitions by which they have connected those distant periods of our Lord's life, are such as they have made use of on other occasions, when they give accounts of things very remote from each other in point of time. For the passage Mat xix. 3. which we have translated, *the Pharisees also came to him tempting him, and saying*, is in the original, *καὶ προσελθόντες αὐτῷ οἱ φαρισαῖοι*, and therefore should have been translated, *and the Pharisees came unto him*. We have the journey from Ephraim to Jerusalem by Jericho, Matt. xx. 1.



Mark x. 32. Luke xviii. 31. From thence to the conclusion, there is no interruption of the history in any of the evangelists; wherefore, in the latter part of their books likewise there is a beautiful agreement which has not been sufficiently taken notice of.

Such is the plan on which I have formed the harmony of our Lord's history, from the third passover, which happened after the first miraculous dinner, John vi. 4. to his passion. It may be worth while to consider not only the foundation upon which it is built, but the opinion of others in so important a branch of the subject. All the evangelists relate the first miraculous dinner, for which reason they must all be supposed to coincide at that period. But John vii. 1. we are told, that *after these things, viz. the first miraculous dinner, and the conversation in the synagogue of Capernaum, Jesus walked in Galilee, for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him.* It seems some fresh attempts had been made upon his life at the passover immediately following the first miraculous dinner, as was shewed in the account of that passover, p. 350. wherefore, the journey into Galilee mentioned John vii. 1. and the other transactions connected with it, come in naturally after that attempt. The transactions connected with the journey into Galilee are, the journey to the country of Tyre and Sidon, the return through Decapolis, the second miraculous dinner, the journey into the territory of Cæsarea Philippi, the transfiguration, the cure of the epileptic boy, and the strife of the disciples about the chief posts in the Messiah's kingdom, as they were travelling into Capernaum, where the receivers of the didrachmas accosted Peter. After the transaction last mentioned, the journey into Judea, through Perea, is related by Matthew and Mark. But about this time the feasts of tabernacles and dedication were celebrated, at both which, according to John's account, Jesus was present. The difficulty therefore is, to fix precisely upon the place of the three histories, where these feasts, with their transactions, should be introduced. To begin with the gospels of Matthew and Mark; the feasts of tabernacles and dedication, which John tells us our Lord attended, should not be brought in before the journey into Judea by Perea, because, properly speaking, there is no place at which they can be introduced into these gospels, till that journey is mentioned. Besides, John, who has given us the history of these feasts, and of our Lord's transactions at them, tells us, that after the third passover, he industriously kept out of Judea, and walked in Galilee for a considerable time, being afraid of the Jews. Since therefore he continued so long in Galilee, his first return into Judea, and by consequence the feasts under consideration, could hardly happen before the journey mentioned by Matthew and Mark, which brought him into Judea through Perea. Yet these feasts must have happened before the next particular found in the gospels of Matthew and Mark, viz. the conversation with the Pharisees on the subject of divorce; because the things related by the two evangelists after that conversation, are so connected together, that there is no where else an opportunity for the feasts to be brought in. Wherefore, with respect to the histories of Matthew and Mark, it cannot be doubted, that the feasts of tabernacles and dedication mentioned by John, should be brought in between the journey into Judea by Perea, and the conversation with the Pharisees on the subject of divorce. The relation which these feasts bear to Luke's history comes next to be considered. Luke ix. 46. the strife of the disciples is mentioned, and, chap. xviii. 15. the history falls in again with Matthew and Mark, in the account of the infants who were brought to Jesus to be blessed. Here, therefore, we have a large detail of transactions, said to have happened between the two events, which stand so near to each other in Matthew and Mark; and consequently to assign John's account of the two feasts their proper places in Luke's history, must be a matter of some difficulty. The whole of Luke, from chap. ix. 51. where the histories separate,



rate, to chap. xviii. 15. where they again coincide, may be placed either before the feasts mentioned, or after them, and before the resurrection of Lazarus; or part before these feasts, and part after; or wholly after the resurrection of Lazarus, and before the concluding passover. That the whole of this passage cannot be placed before the feasts, is evident from several particulars in the passage itself; for instance, Luke xiii. 35. where, in his first lamentation over Jerusalem, Jesus declares, that its inhabitants should not see his face till they should say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord;" wherefore he did not enter Jerusalem after that, till he was received with hosannas. The passage in Luke cannot be wholly brought in after the feasts, and before the resurrection of Lazarus, because if our Lord died at the following passover, there was no feast in that period to which he could be going when the Samaritans refused to lodge him, Luke ix. 53. Indeed because it is said, Luke ix. 51. *And it came to pass, that when the time was come that he should be received up, &c.* it may be thought, that this part of the history should be wholly placed after the resurrection of Lazarus, and before the passover at which Jesus suffered. But, besides the reason mentioned, the Greek *ἔντετις ὁ καιρὸς τοῦ ἀναλυσθαι αὐτοῦ*, does not imply, that the precise moment of our Lord's ascension was come. The time was fulfilled, which, according to the Hebrew idiom, signifies, that it approached or drew on. Withal, the mission of the seventy disciples, the transactions following thereon, our Lord's return into Galilee, Luke xvii. 11. and the journey through part of Samaria, all related in the passage before us, seem to be inconsistent with this scheme of harmony. Upon the whole, the plan laid down in the beginning of this note, looks more like the truth than any of the rest, viz. that part of the passage in hand contains an account of what happened between the feasts of Tabernacles and Dedication, and part of it what happened after the feast of Dedication, and before the resurrection of Lazarus. Indeed Le Clerc goes differently to work upon the same scheme. He supposes that the seventy disciples were sent out as our Lord was going up to the feast of Tabernacles; accordingly he relates their return, Luke x. 17. after John's account of the transactions at that feast, chap. vii. 1. to chap. x. 21. then brings in the whole of Luke, from chap. x. 21. to chap. xviii. 15. and after that gives John's account of the feast of Dedication. And because Matt. xix. 1. and Mark x. 1. tell us, that Jesus returned into Judea through the country beyond Jordan, he supposes, that Jesus went away after the feast of Dedication into Galilee, and from thence passed into the country beyond Jordan, and so returned to Judea. But against this order it may be objected, 1. That both Matthew and Mark affirm expressly, that the journey into Judea by Perea immediately followed the reproof given to the disciples, for contending who should be the greatest. 2. When Jesus went to the feast of Tabernacles, he did not go openly, but as it were in secret, John vii. 10. Whereas in the journey, Luke ix. 51. which Le Clerc and others suppose was to this feast, he sent forth the seventy disciples, was followed by a great crowd, and no doubt wrought several miracles, Luke ix. 57. x. 25. Besides, in the fore-cited passage, John tells us, that Jesus did not go from Galilee to the feast of Tabernacles, till his brethren were departed; if so, he could have little time by the way to work miracles in Samaria, or send forth the seventy, as Le Clerc and others are obliged to suppose, who think the journey mentioned Luke ix. 51. was to the feast of Tabernacles. To conclude, this journey is said to have happened when the time of his being received up drew on, Luke ix. 51, and consequently agrees better to the feast of Dedication, which happened about two months after the feast of Tabernacles, and but four months before the Passover; for in that space all the subsequent transactions mentioned in the history might easily happen. See the second preliminary observation, 3. To bring in the feast of dedication,



as Le Clerc does, after Luke xviii. 14. seems contrary to our Lord's declaration, Luke xiii. 35. *Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord*: which implies, that he did not go to Jerusalem, till he rode in amidst the triumphs and acclamations of the people, a few days before his death. 4. John seems to say, that after the feast of Dedication our Lord went directly to Bethabara, beyond Jordan; whereas Le Clerc, and the rest, find themselves obliged to suppose, that he went first to Galilee, and from Galilee into Perea.

§ LXXVI. *Jesus goes up to Jerusalem to celebrate the feast of tabernacles. In the temple he preaches to a great concourse of people. While he is preaching, the senate send their officers to apprehend him. The officers, charmed with his eloquence, go away without attempting to lay hands on him. Jesus continues his discourse.* John vii. 2,—53. viii. 1.

AND now the feast of tabernacles drew on, which the law, Lev. xxiii. 39. ordained to begin on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, answering to our September and October, so that it happened in the end of the former, or in the beginning of the latter month. During the continuance of that solemnity, the males of the Jewish nation that were fit to travel, dwelt at Jerusalem in tents or tabernacles made of the boughs of trees, in commemoration of their fathers having dwelt in tabernacles of this kind for the space of forty years in the wilderness. A little while before the feast, Jesus being in Galilee, whither he had returned from the fourth passover, some of his kinsmen, who had not as yet believed on him, desired him to go up to the approaching solemnity and shew himself. John vii. 2. *Now the Jews feast of tabernacles was at hand*: 3. *His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judea, that thy disciples there also may see the works which thou doest*: 4. *For there is no man that doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly; if thou do these things, shew thyself to the world*. 5. *For neither did his brethren believe on him*. As they did not believe on him, they condemned him in their own minds, and said that he acted altogether absurdly, in passing so much of his time in Galilee, and the other remote corners of the country, while he pretended to so public a character as that of Messiah; that it would be much more for his interest to make disciples in Jerusalem and Judea, the seat of power; and that he ought to work his miracles there as publicly as possible, before the great and learned men of the nation, whose decision in his favour would have great influence to induce others to believe on him. But Jesus knowing the malice of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, did not incline to be among them longer than was absolutely necessary, lest they might have taken away his life prematurely. He therefore told his relations, that his time of going up to the feast was not yet come. 6. *Then said Jesus unto them, My time is*



not yet come, but your time is alway ready. 7. The world cannot bate you, but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil. It is not proper for me to go up till the feast is about to begin, but ye may go up at any time you please, since you have done nothing to make the Jews unfriendly to you, as I have done, who, by the purity of my doctrine, and the freedom of my reproofs, have provoked their malice to the highest pitch. 8. Go ye up unto this feast; I go not up yet unto this feast, for my time is not yet full come: the time of his sufferings, which the evangelist calls his *hour*, ch. viii. 20. or the time of his going up to the feast. 9. When he had said these words unto them, he abode still in Galilee. 10. But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret. This suggests another reason for our Lord's delay. Had he taken his journey at the usual time, the multitudes that were on the road gathering round him, and accompanying him to Jerusalem, might have given fresh matter of offence to his enemies; for which reason he did not set out till the bulk of the people were gone, and then he went up, *not openly, but as it were in secret*; that is, he neither preached, nor wrought miracles by the way, nor had any crowd attending him.

Jesus did not appear publicly immediately on his arrival in Jerusalem, which occasioned the Jews to dispute his character. Some affirmed that he was a true prophet, and that his not attending the feast might be owing to several accidents. Others affirmed that he was a deceiver, who paid no regard to the divine institutions. However, his friends defended him only in private, not daring to speak openly in his behalf, for fear of the inhabitants of Jerusalem. John vii. 11. *Then the Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he?* 12. *And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man; others said, Nay, but he deceiveth the people.* 13. *Howbeit, no man spake openly in defence of him, for fear of the Jews.* At length, about the middle of the feast, Jesus came into the temple, and preached many important doctrines of true religion, with such strength of reason, clearness of method, and elegance of expression, that his enemies themselves were astonished, knowing that he had not the advantage of a liberal education. 14. *Now, about the midst of the feast, Jesus went up into the temple, and taught.* 15. *And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?* 16. *Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me:* The doctrine which I teach you is not the product of human wisdom. I have neither been taught it by masters, nor have I acquired it by my own study; but it is the doctrine of God who has inspired me with it, because I am his messenger. He told



told them likewise, that they could be at no loss to know from whence he, or any teacher, derived his doctrine, provided they were themselves virtuous persons, had laid aside their prejudices, and were resolved to do the will of God, how contrary soever it might prove to their own inclinations. 17. *If any man will do his will* (*ὁτις το ἡγμενα αὐτου ποιειν, is desirous to do his will*) *he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.* Good men can easily judge of any teacher, whether he and his doctrine come from God, not only because the divine wisdom and goodness are interested to secure such from capital errors, but because they themselves have no predominant evil inclinations to prejudice them against the truth, when it appears; and because they can discern how far any doctrine is conformable to the principles of virtue, which they possess. Hence, if one teaches what makes for the advancement of his own worldly interest, or for the gratification of his pride, or any other evil passion, the doers of the will of God will immediately know that such a teacher is an impostor. 18. *He that speaketh of himself, seeketh his own glory.* Whereas if a prophet proposes doctrines, which have a tendency to reform men and to advance the glory of God, without regard to the opinion of the world or to his own interest, he must certainly be sent of God, and should not by any means be suspected of imposture; *but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him:* no falsehood, no design to deceive the world.— 19. *Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?* There is a remarkable beauty in this sudden turn of the sentiment. Some of the Jews called Jesus a false prophet, because on the sabbath he had healed the paralytic, who lay in one of the porticos of Bethesda, (John v. 9.) pretending that it was a gross violation of the law of Moses, which no good man, far less a prophet, would be guilty of. In answer to these evil surmises, he told them plainly, that however much they pretended to reverence the authority of Moses in his law, they made no scruple to violate the most sacred of his precepts; they had entered into a resolution of murdering him, directly contrary to every law of God and man, and for the same end were laying secret plots against his life. This reproof came in with singular propriety and force, immediately after Jesus had, by the most convincing arguments, proved his mission from God. John vii. 20. *The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil; either thou art mad, or thou art actuated by the malice of the devil, (see on chap. viii. 48. § 77.) who goeth about to kill thee?* 21. *Jesus answered and said unto them, "I have*

\* Ver. 21. *I have done one work, and ye all marvel.*] With this clause should be joined the words *ὁτις τοις* in the beginning of the next verse, if we



*have done one work, and ye all marvel: I have done a miracle of an extraordinary kind on the sabbath, which ye think inconsistent with the character of a good man, and therefore ye wonder how I have performed it; but I can easily vindicate my character by an argument, which it is not in your power to gainsay.* 22. \* *Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision, the law of circumcision, (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers) and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man.* The sentence should be construed thus: καὶ ὁ σαββάτου περιτομῆς ἀπέδωκεν ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ Μωϋσέως ἐστίν, ἀλλ' οὐ τῶν πατέρων, *and on the sabbath ye circumcise a man, not because it is a precept of Moses only, (see on Luke xiv. 12. § 92.) but of the fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.* 23. *If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken, are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day?* ἐπὶ ἰσὺν ἀνθρώπου ἑνὶ σαββάτῳ; *because I have made a whole man. or the whole of a man sound on the sabbath day:* Since ye think yourselves bound to dispense with the strict observation of the sabbath for the sake of another precept, which is only of a ceremonial nature, how can ye be angry with me, because, in pursuance of the great end of all the divine laws, I have cured a man who was infirm in all his members, and that with far less bodily labour than you perform the ceremony of circumcision, and cure the wound that is made by it? 24. *Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment:* Consider the nature of the things, and judge impartially; without regard to your own prejudices, or to the superstition of your teachers. 25. *Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he whom they seek to kill?* 26. *But he, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him; do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?* The inhabitants of Jerusalem, always Christ's bitter enemies, asked with surprise and irony, if our Lord's boldness, and the silence of the rulers, proceeded from their having acknowledged him as the Messiah. At the same time, in derision of his pretensions, they added, John vii.

we may trust the judgment of Henry Stephens, Casaubon, Beza, Bois, Knatchbull, Homberg, Mills, &c. *I have done one work, and ye all marvel at it.* And it must be acknowledged, that we have precisely the same construction, Mark vi. 6. καὶ θαυμάζει διὰ τὴν ἀπίστεν αὐτοῦ, *he marvelled at their unbelief.* All the versions, however, retain the common pointing.

\* Ver. 22. *Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision, &c.]* Διὰ τοῦτο Μωϋσὴς δίδωκεν ὑμῖν τὴν περιτομὴν, &c. If the common pointing of this passage is retained, the translation must run thus: *Because that Moses gave you the precept concerning circumcision, ye circumcise a man even on the Sabbath.* But the correction proposed by the critics mentioned above, makes the sense more clear and elegant; thus, 22. *Moses gave you the law of circumcision, and on the Sabbath ye circumcise a man, not because it is a precept of Moses only, but of the fathers.* 23. *If a man receive circumcision on the Sabbath, in order that the law of Moses be not broken, are ye angry with me because I have made the whole of a man sound on the Sabbath?*



*vii. 27. Howbeit, we know this man whence he is? i.e. we know his parents and relations, (John vi. 42.) but when Christ cometh, \* no man knoweth whence he is, alluding to the obvious popular sense of Isa. liii. 8. "who shall declare his generation?" 28. Then said Jesus in the temple, as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom you know not: Though you pretend to know me, and whence I am, it does not follow that I am destitute of the prophetic characters of Messiah, and an impostor come to you of my own accord. I am really sent to you by God, who is true in all the prophecies he uttered by his servants, concerning Messiah, for they are all fulfilled in me; but you are wholly ignorant of his blessed perfections and gracious counsels, and have no inclination to obey his will. 29. But I know him, for I am from him, and he hath sent me. Were you acquainted with what the prophets have said concerning Messiah, as you pretend to be, you would know this to be one of his principal characters, that he is to understand the perfections and will of God more fully, and to explain them unto men more clearly, than any messenger from God ever did before. Withal, by considering the nature of my doctrine, you would see this character remarkably fulfilled in me, and thereby would be sensible that I am from God, and that he hath sent me.*

This defence did not pacify his enemies, for some of them would gladly have apprehended him; however, none of them had the courage to lay hands on him, being restrained by Providence, because the season of his sufferings was not yet come. *John vii. 30. Then they sought to take him; but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.* In the meantime, the miracle which he had lately performed on the infirm man, was so great, and so well known; and this defence by which he justified himself so clear and so convincing, that many of the people believed on him, publicly affirming that he was Messiah. *31. And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?* The attachment

\* *Ver. 27. No man knoweth whence he is.]* That this is not meant of the place of Messiah's birth, as the author of the Literal Scheme would have us to believe, but of his particular parents and relations, is plain from the following verse 42. where the people who spoke the above declare their knowledge of the place of Messiah's birth, and of the family from which he was to spring. *42. Hath not the Scripture said, that Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem where David was?* That the Jews knew the place of Messiah's birth, is evident likewise from the answer which the chief priests and Pharisees returned to Herod, who demanded of them where Christ should be born. *Matt. xi. 4. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. 5. And they said unto him, in Bethlehem of Judea; for thus it is written by the prophet. 6. And thou Bethlehem in the land of Juda, &c.*



attachment of the common people to Jesus, greatly incensed the chief priests and Pharisees, with all their adherents; and therefore, on the last and great day of the feast, being met in council (as appears from verse 32. 45. 50. 53. compared) they sent their officers to apprehend him, and bring him before them, thinking to confuse his pretensions, and punish him. 32. *The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him.*

While these things were doing in the council, Jesus was preaching to the people concerning the improvement which it became them to make of his ministry among them. John vii. 33. *Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while I am with you, and then I go unto him that sent me, see ver. 29.* My ministry among you is drawing towards a conclusion; you ought therefore, while it lasts, to make the best possible improvement of it, particularly you should listen to my sermons with great attention, that you may have your minds stored with the truths of God, before I go away; for after I am gone, you shall earnestly desire my presence with you, but shall not obtain it. 34. *Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me.* This seeking for the Christ, or Messiah, was general through the nation, during the calamities in Judea, occasioned by Titus and his armies; and has continued among the Jews ever since, in all the countries where they have been dispersed, but to no purpose, for their Messiah having already appeared, it is in vain to expect another. By thus predicting his own death, our Lord insinuated, that he both knew the present disposition of the council, and foresaw that they would soon put an end to his ministry, by taking away his life. *And \* where I am, thither ye cannot come:* Ye cannot come to heaven where I am soon to be. The reason mentioned in the parallel passage, shews this to be our Lord's meaning, chap. viii. 21. "I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins, whither I go, ye cannot come;" because ye shall die in your sins, or, as it is expressed in this discourse, because ye shall not find me, you cannot come to heaven. 35. *Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will he go, that we shall not find him?* Jesus spake concerning his death, resurrection, and ascension; but the Jews did not understand him, for they imagined that he threatened to leave them,

\* Ver. 34. *Where I am, &c*] Henry Stephens, Casaubon, Tanaquil Faber, and Pearson were of opinion, that for *where I am* (*ūm, sum*) we should read *where I go*, (*ūm, eo*, changing the accent) as it is expressed in the parallel passage, chap. viii. 21. The common reading, however, is justly defended by Grotius, who observes, that *ūm, eo*, is a poetical word, seldom used by prose writers. Nor is there the least necessity for the alteration proposed; our Lord's declaration, and the answer which the Jews made to it, being perfectly coherent according to the common reading: *ye shall seek me, and shall not find me; and where I am, namely, when ye seek, thither ye cannot come.*



them, and go among their brethren of the dispersion: *will he go to the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles?* 36. *What manner of saying is this that he hath said, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me, and where I am, thither ye cannot come?* This saying is unintelligible and absurd, for though his meaning be, that he is going to preach among the Gentiles, surely it is possible for us to follow him thither.

It is commonly supposed, that while Jesus was thus discoursing in the temple, on the last and great day of the feast, the water from Siloam was brought into the womens court (see the description of the temple in the note on § 122.) with the usual solemnities, according to the directions of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, if we may believe the Jewish writers. Part of this water they drank with loud acclamations, in commemoration of the mercy shewed to their fathers, who were relieved by the miracle of a great stream of water made to gush out of a rock, (Psalm lxxviii. 20.) when the nation was ready to die with thirst in a sandy desert, where was neither river nor spring; and part of it they poured out as a drink-offering, which they accompanied with prayers to almighty God for a plentiful rain to fall at the following seed-time; the people in the mean time singing the passage, Isa. xlii. 3. *With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.* Jesus, whose custom it was to raise moral instructions from sensible occurrences, took this opportunity of inviting, in the most solemn and affectionate manner, all who were in pursuit whether of knowledge or happiness, to come unto him and drink, in allusion to the rite they were then employed about. By coming to him and drinking, he meant believing on him, as is plain from chap. vi. 35. § 62. And to encourage them, he promised them the gifts of his Spirit, which he represented under the image of a river flowing from their belly, to express the efficacy and perpetuity of these gifts, together with the divine pleasures which they produce, by quenching the desires of those who possess them, and fructifying others who come within their influence. See on John iv. 14. § 22. John vii. 37. *In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood, probably in some conspicuous place, and cried, saying, If any man thirst, (see Isa. lv. 1.) let him come unto me, and drink. 38. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living*

\* Ver. 38. *As the Scripture hath said.*] Some imagine, that our Lord had one or other of the following passages now in his eye, Isa. xxxv. 6. xlii. 3. lvi. 11. Ezek. xxxvi. 25.—27. &c. However, as none of these texts contain the precise words, Castalio, Zegerus, Capellus, and others, relying on the authority of the Syriac version, and of Theophylact, would have the sentence pointed in such a manner, that the clause, *as the Scripture hath said* (or *commanded*, *etc.* see on Matt. ix. 5. § 33.) may be joined to *he that believeth on me*, and separated from *out of his belly shall flow*, &c.

According



*Living water.* The flowing of rivers of living water out of the believer's belly, is an idea taken from receptacles round springs, out of which great quantities of water flow by pipes. This figure, therefore, represented the plenitude of spiritual gifts to be possessed by believers, and the happy effects which they should produce in the world. The faculty of speaking all the different languages on earth fluently, which was the first gift of the Spirit, qualifying them to preach such doctrines of the gospel as the Spirit revealed to them, they were both watered themselves, and in a condition to water the Gentiles, not with small streams, but with large rivers of divine knowledge; and so the land, which till then had been barren, was from that time forth to be exceeding fruitful in righteousness to God. Accordingly the evangelist adds, by way of explication, 39. *But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified:* The gifts of illumination and utterance were not yet communicated to believers, being what they received on the day of Pentecost, to fit them for converting the world. Nevertheless, if the universality of the invitation and promise inclines the reader to think, that on this occasion our Lord had the ordinary influences of the Spirit also in his eye, the evangelist's remark, that *the Holy Ghost was not yet given*, will not exclude them; because even these might at that time be said not to have been given, as they had been given but sparingly, in comparison of the plentiful distribution which was to be made of them to all believers after Christ's ascension. Accordingly, the ordinary influences of the Spirit, are often in scripture represented as the consequences and reward of faith, Gal. iii. 14. Eph. i. 12.

On this subject Jesus, it seems, was discoursing, when the officers sent by the council to apprehend him (ver. 32.) came up; but as it was an uncommon topic, and he seemed to be speaking with great fervency, their curiosity made them willing to hear him a little before they laid hands on him, verse 44, 45. The eloquence with which he handled his subject, struck them; every word he uttered being well chosen, aptly placed, and gracefully pronounced, there was not only a sweetness in his sermons that enchanted the ear, but a plainness and perspicuity also, which made the beauties of truth shine before the understanding with that lustre which is peculiar to themselves. Even these his enemies, who were come with an intent to lay violent hands on him, were deeply smitten. The greatness of his subject, made as it were visible by the divine speaker, filled their understandings; the warmth and tenderness with which he delivered himself, pe-

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netrated

According to this pointing, our Lord does not say that the Scripture promises rivers shall flow out of the believer's belly, but only that it commands men to believe on him.



netrated their hearts ; they felt new and uncommon emotions ; in a word, being overwhelmed with the greatness of their admiration, they silently stood astonished, condemning themselves for having come on the errand ; and after a while returned without accomplishing it, see ver. 44, 45. 'Had our Lord in this discourse pleaded for his life to the officers of the council, as Plutarch tells us in Mario Marcus Antonius the orator did to Marius' soldiers, who came to kill him, his success with them had been a great and wonderful effect of eloquence ; but it must appear unspeakably greater, and be superior to all praise, when we consider that it was a discourse addressed to others, and on a spiritual subject too, which thus disarmed a band of enemies and rendered them friendly. The officers were not the only persons on whom this sermon made a deep impression ; our Lord's hearers in general were greatly affected with it, for many of them gave it as their opinion, that he was certainly one of the ancient prophets risen from the dead to usher in Messiah ; others declared, that they believed he was Messiah himself. Nevertheless, some of them, led away with the common mistake that he was born in Nazareth, asked with disdain if Messiah was to come out of Galilee ? John vii. 40. *Many of the people, therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the prophet.* 41. *Others said, This is the Christ.* But some said, *Shall Christ come out of Galilee ?* 42. *Hath not the Scripture said that Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was ?* Is not your acknowledging a Galilean for Messiah contrary to the scripture, which has determined Messiah's nativity to Bethlehem, the town of his father David ? 43. *So there was a division among the people because of him :* They fell into a hot dispute about him, and carried their contentions to such a height, that his enemies, knowing on what errand the officers were come, threatened to apprehend him, but were restrained by the providence of God. 44. *And some of them would have taken him, but no man laid hands on him.* 45. *Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees ; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him ?* 46. *The officers answered, Never man spake like this man.* But the enraged priests reviled them for presuming to entertain a favourable opinion of one whom they affirmed to be an impostor. 47. *Then answered the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived ?* Ye who have the advantage of knowing our sentiments concerning this person ? 48. *Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him ?* 49. *But this people (οχλος υτας, this rabble, so they affected to call Christ's friends) who knoweth not the law are cursed.* This was downright railing. Nevertheless, a member of the court, named Nicodemus, who secretly entertained a veneration for Jesus, and was his disciple, defended him, by asking his brethren whether their law authorized them



to condemn a man before they had proof of his guilt? John vii. 50. *Nicodemus saith unto them (he that came to Jesus by night being one of them) 51. Doth our law judge, (nemine condemn) any man before it hear him, and know what he doth?* From Nicodemus' being present, it appears to have been a meeting of the council whereof he was a member; for had it been a private cabal of the great men to take away Christ's life, Christ's disciple never would have joined them. It seems the council was met to try Jesus on the crime of his being a false prophet; compare verses 31, 32. And as the priests had upbraided their servants with ignorance of the law, Nicodemus' reproof was smooth and sharp. Notwithstanding that perfect knowledge of the law, and that high reverence for its precepts which they made such a boast of, they were acting directly contrary to the most essential principles of equity established by it; a reproof the more poignant and provoking, that it was well founded. Being therefore in a great passion with Nicodemus for condemning their conduct and speaking favourably of Jesus, they asked him with an air of disdain and surprise, mixed with fierceness, 52. *Art thou also of Galilee?* Art thou one of the ignorant low faction, that has leagued to support a Galilean Messiah, in opposition to the law, which has determined the Messiah's nativity to Bethlehem?—*Search, and look; for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet:* they meant, no Messiah, the prophet foretold by Moses in the law; for they could not but know that Jonah was of Gath-hepher, in Galilee, (2 Kings xiv. 25.) unless they were as ignorant of the Scriptures as they said the common people were, ver. 48. But be this as it will, such blind judges were these masters of law and learning, that an argument which had no force against Jesus, who was actually born in Bethlehem, weighed a great deal more with them than all the solid proofs by which he so fully established his mission. To conclude, the council separated; and Jesus, having perfect knowledge of their designs, went to lodge in the mount of Olives, that he might be out of their reach; see on Luke xxi. 37. §. 124. 53. *And every man went into his own house,* chap. viii. 1. (*ikos di*) *But Jesus went unto the mount of Olives.*

**§ LXXVII.** *The woman that was caught committing adultery, is placed before Jesus in the temple. John viii. 2,—59.*

EARLY next morning, Jesus returned to the temple, and as usual taught the people. John viii. 2. *And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him, and he sat down and taught them.* But while he was thus employed, the scribes and Pharisees set a woman before him that had been taken in the act of adultery; and standing round him, desired his opinion in the affair. 3. *And the scribes and Pharisees brought*  
unto



unto him a woman taken in adultery, and when they had set her in the midst, 4. They say ~~unto~~ to him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. 5. Now \* Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? The evangelist says, the Pharisees desired our Lord's opinion in this matter with an insidious intention: John viii. 6. † This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. Probably the Romans had modelled the laws of Judea according to the jurisprudence of Rome, and in particular had mitigated the severity of the punishment of the adulterers. Wherefore, if Jesus should say that the law of Moses ought to be executed upon this adulteress, the Pharisees hoped the people would stone her immediately, which would afford them an opportunity of accusing him before the governor as a mover of sedition. But if he determined that the innovations practised by the Romans in such cases should take place, they resolved to represent him to the people as one who made void the law, out of complaisance to their heathen masters. This their craft and wickedness Jesus fully knew, and regulated his conduct towards these depraved hypocrites accordingly,

\* Ver. 5. *Moses in the law commanded, &c.*] The law, Lev. xx. 10. Deut. xxii. 22. required, in the general, that adultery should be punished with death; but did not determine the kind of it. Only because it is ordered, Deut. xxii. 23, 24. that the betrothed damsel, guilty of adultery, should be stoned, it is supposed that in process of time this kind of death was appropriated to such offenders; and that the punishment of the married adulterers, Lev. xx. 10. was interpreted to mean strangling. Agreeably to these suppositions, it is conjectured, that the woman now before Jesus was only betrothed. But the distinction has no foundation; for it is evident from Ezek. xvi. that the proper punishment of all kinds of adultery was stoning; ver. 38. *I will judge thee as women that break wedlock are judged*. And (ver. 40.) *They shall stone thee with stones*.

† Ver. 6. *This they said, tempting him, &c.*] The reason was, had he declared against stoning the adulterers, they certainly would have represented him to the people as contradicting Moses, and favouring adultery, hoping by that means to have lessened his authority with them. On the other hand, had he ordered her to be stoned, it would have afforded a plausible pretence for accusing him unto the governor, as a person who stirred up the people to rebellion; the Romans, who had now taken the power of life and death into their own hands, not exercising such severity of punishment upon the women who were guilty of adultery. Le Clerc, however, in his Supplement to Hammond's Annotations, affirms, that the Pharisees could not have any intention of this kind, because the answer he might have returned was obvious; namely, that according to the law the woman ought to be stoned, but that, as matters then stood, such a punishment was impracticable, without the governor's permission. Yet the common opinion is more probable, because it is not impossible but that in cases where the Romans had modelled the Jewish laws according to the institutions of Rome, some of the complaisant doctors may have attempted to vindicate the latter as more equitable than the former, especially when they suited the inclinations of mankind better. Wherefore, if the Pharisees imagined he was a teacher of this kind, they might expect his decision would irritate the people; for that they proposed their question with an evil intention, the evangelist expressly affirms.



toringly, for he made them no answer. Perhaps there were in this woman's case, some circumstances tending to alleviate her guilt, such as her past innocence known to Jesus, her present repentance which he could easily discern, and the strength of the temptations by which she had been hurried into the sin. There may have been something likewise in her accusers characters, well known to him, which made it proper for them to desist from the prosecution. Also Jesus might now, as on other occasions, decline assuming the character and office of a civil magistrate. Lastly, the persons who demanded his opinion, were by no means the judges to whom the execution of the law was committed, but Pharisees who at bottom were gross hypocrites, notwithstanding they professed the greatest concern for the honour of the divine law. Whatever was the reason, Jesus did not encourage this prosecution. *But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not*, or had not been attending to what they said; for to write on the ground is the action of one, who being wholly wrapt up in his own thoughts, does not take notice of any thing that passes without. 7. *So when they continued asking him*, i. e. pressed him to give an answer, *he lift up himself, and said unto them*, in allusion to the law, Deut. xvii. 7. which ordered that the hands of the witnesses, by whose testimony an idolater was convicted, should be first upon him, and afterwards the hands of all the people: \* *He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her*. His meaning was, that persons exceedingly zealous in getting punishment executed on others, ought to be free themselves, at least from gross sins; for which cause, as you are all guilty of equal or greater, or, it may be, the like offences, and deserve the damnation of God, ye should shew mercy to this sinner, who may have fallen through the strength of temptation, rather than of evil inclination, and who is now truly sorry for her offence. Our Lord's words made such an impression on the minds of these hypocrites, and raised in them such strong convictions of sin, as soon put their zeal to shame, and made them afraid to stay, lest Jesus might have made their particular sins public. John viii. 8. *And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground*, giving them an opportunity to withdraw, which they embraced. 9. *And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience*, that is, their conscience smiting them with remorse, because they at some time or other of their lives had been guilty of the very sin for which

\* Ver. 7. *He that is without sin, &c.*] Bede, Fabricius, Wolf, and others, are of opinion, that these were the words which Jesus wrote on the ground; but the description which the evangelist gives of that action, does not agree with this conjecture, for he says, *Jesus wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not*; which could not so properly have been said of him, had he wrote an answer to their question.



which they proposed to have this woman stoned, *went out one by one, \* beginning at the eldest, even unto the last*: and this they did although when they first came they had been exceedingly incensed against her. The woman's accusers being all fled, Jesus told her, that since none of them had doomed her to the punishment of death which she deserved, or rather, since none of them had executed that punishment on her, neither would he; withal, he advised her to beware of the like sin for the future, and so dismissed her, very glad no doubt of having escaped stoning, the death she had been dreading the moment before 10. *When Jesus lift up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? † hath no man condemned thee?* Hath no man punished thee in casting the first stone at thee? 11. *She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee, I do not order that thou shouldest be now punished, go and sin no more ‡*: Though I do not order thee to be punished at this time, thou must not think that I approve of thy conduct. Thou hast committed a great sin, and I charge thee to beware of committing it any more.

In this transaction Jesus appears unspeakably great, having displayed on the occasion a degree of wisdom, and knowledge, and power, and goodness, vastly more than human. His wisdom he shewed in defending himself against the malicious attacks of his enemies; his knowledge, in discovering the invisible state of their mind; his power, in making use of their own secret thoughts and convictions to disappoint their crafty intentions; and his goodness in pitying, and not punishing instantly, one who had been guilty of an atrocious act of wickedness. Wherefore it was with singular propriety, that after this remarkable decision, addressing himself to his disciples and the multitude, he called himself *the light of the world*, in allusion either to Mal. iv. 2. where Messiah is foretold under the name of the *Sun of righteousness*, or to the bright shining of the sun that morning. John viii. 12. *Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world*:

\* Ver. 9. *Beginning at the eldest, even unto the last*] ἀρχαίους ἀπὸ τῶν νεώτερον ἕως τῶν ὑψίστων. This Keuchenius interprets, *beginning at the most honourable, even unto the lowest of them*.

† Ver. 10. *Hath no man condemned thee?*] That is, hath no man punished thee? For, as the critics observe, *κρίνω* and *κατακρίνω* are frequently used in the sense of chastising and punishing. LXX. Gen. xv. 4. 2 Chron. xx. 12. Psal. ix. 10. Acts vii. 7. Heb. xiii. 4.

‡ The paragraph in the text which contains the history of the adulteress, is wanting in many MSS. But as Augustine long ago rightly conjectured, *De adulterinis coniugiis*, lib. ii. cap. 7. it was dropped, for fear the ignorant vulgar might have taken occasion from it, to think lightly of sins against the marriage-bed. Nevertheless, if it is rightly understood, and especially if the charge with which our Lord dismissed this adulteress is attended to, it will shew us that adultery is an heinous offence, an offence which Jesus is so far from approving, that he has openly and expressly condemned it.



world: I am the spiritual sun that dispels the darkness of ignorance and superstition, with which the minds of men are overcast; for by my doctrine and example, I shew clearly everywhere, the will of God and the way of salvation. But he likened himself to the great luminary of the day, with this express difference, that he never leaves those in darkness who walk by his light, as the sun does travellers, when he sets and occasions the darkness of night. *He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.* 13. *The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true: thou art a vain-glorious boaster, and therefore must certainly be a deceiver; alluding perhaps to what he had said, chap. vii. 18.* 14. *Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go: though I call myself the light of the world, ye are not to imagine that I do it from a spirit of pride and falsehood. I gave myself the title for no other reason but because it truly belongs to me; and that it does so you yourselves would acknowledge, if you knew as well as I do, by what authority I act, for what end I am come, and to whom I must return, after I have executed my commission. But these things you are entirely ignorant of; nor can it be otherwise in regard that—*15. *Ye judge after the flesh, I judge no man: Ye judge of me according to outward appearances, and condemn me for this, among other things, that I judge no man. You think that I cannot be the Messiah, because I do not destroy those who oppose me, as you imagine the Messiah will do; but in this you are altogether mistaken, for the design of the Messiah's coming is not to destroy but to save mankind. At the same time he told them, that if he should condemn any person for unbelief, the condemnation of such would be just, because his mission was true, being confirmed not by his own testimony only, but by the Father's also; and because every sentence of that kind which he should pass, would be pronounced by the authority, and agreeably to the will of his Father.* 16. *And yet if I judge, my judgment is true, i. e. just, equitable; for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me* This led him to speak of the testimony which the Father bare to his mission. 17. *It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true: You could not justly complain, if I should punish you for your unbelief in such a case as this, since your own law directs you to believe every matter that is confirmed by the concurring testimony of two witnesses, as my mission evidently is. For,* 18. *I am one that bear witness of myself, not by words only, but by all the actions of my life, which are perfectly agreeable to the character of a messenger from heaven: and the Father that sent me beareth witness*



*witness of me*, by the miracles which he has enabled me to perform, (see on John v. 32. 36. § 45.) so that you are altogether culpable in rejecting me. John viii. 19. *Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father*, the other witness to whom thou appealest? *Jesus answered*, It plainly appears by your conduct, that *ye neither know me, nor my Father*; for if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: If ye had any just notion of me, ye should have known who it is that I call my Father; that is to say, if you knew me to be the Messiah, you would know that my Father is God. 20 *These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple*; and no man laid hands on him, for his hour was not yet come. The treasury was that part of the womens court where the chests were placed for receiving the offerings of those who came to worship, (see on Mark xii. 41. § 122.) and consequently was a place of great concourse, being resorted unto even by the priests and rulers. Wherefore the evangelist's remark, that the preceding conversation happened in the treasury, gives us a notion of our Lord's intrepidity; though he was in the midst of his enemies, he spake boldly, not fearing them in the least. It seems the providence of God to overrule the spirits of these wicked men, that none of them attempted to seize Jesus, because the time of his sufferings was not yet come.

John viii. 21. *Then said Jesus again unto them*, probably in the treasury, where the preceding discourse was pronounced, *I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins; whither I go, ye cannot come*. He had said this to them in a former discourse, (chap. vii. 34. § 76.) and repeated it now, that it might make the deeper impression upon them. He meant, that after his ascension into heaven, when the Roman armies were spreading desolation and death in every corner of the land, they would earnestly desire the coming of Messiah, in expectation of deliverance, but should die for their sins, and under the guilt of them, without any saviour whatsoever, and be excluded for ever from heaven. Perhaps in this our Lord opposed a common error of the Jews, who imagined, that by death they made atonement for all their sins. 22. *Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come*. 23. *And he said unto them, Ye are from below, I am from above; ye are of this world, I am not of this world*: Such a vile insinuation evidently shews what sort of persons ye are, and from whence you have derived your original. Being from the earth, ye are obnoxious to all the evil passions wherewith human nature is infested; and from what you feel in yourselves, you fancy that I am capable of murdering myself. But your thought is foolish, as is evident from this, that being actuated by no evil passion, I cannot have the least temptation to commit so gross an act of wickedness.



My extraction is heavenly, and my mind pure ; and therefore I cannot be guilty of self-murder, or of any other sin whatever. 24. *I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins : because ye are from below, and are full of evil inclinations, they will hinder you from believing ; which is the reason that I said you shall die in your sins, and be your own murderers : \* for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins : if you do not believe that I am the bread of life, the heavenly manna, the light of the world, the Messiah, ye shall die in your sins.* What followed, shews this to have been our Lord's meaning, though he did not express himself fully, having handled these matters before at great length in this and other discourses. John viii. 25. *Then said they unto him, Who art thou ?* They had already asked where his Father was, verse 19. they now demand to know what sort of person he was himself. † *Jesus saith unto them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning.* 26. *I have many things to say and to judge of you ; but he that sent me is true, and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him.* On supposition that this is the proper translation of the passage, our Lord's meaning was, I am that which I said to you at the beginning of this discourse, viz. *the light of the world.* But according to the translation mentioned in the note, the meaning is, Because I have long exercised my ministry among you, and ye have not profited thereby as ye ought to have done, I have many reproofs to give you, and a severe sentence of condemnation to pass upon you ; nevertheless, I shall wave them all at present, and tell you only one thing, that you may think upon it seriously, namely, that he who sent me is truth and goodness itself, and that I speak to the world nothing but what I have received from him, however dark or disagreeable these things may be to persons of your wicked dispositions. Accordingly, such was their stupidity, that they did not understand he was speaking to them of God. 27. *They understood not that he spake to them of the Father.* 28. *Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lift up the Son of Man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself ; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things : When ye have crucified me, ye shall know*

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\* Ver. 24. *For if ye believe not that I am he, &c.]* Le Clerc proposes the following translation of this clause : *Unless ye believe me to be that which I am,* dividing the word *ἵνα* after this manner, *ὅτι*, as it is verse 25. But the common reading is more agreeable to the scope of the discourse.

† Ver. 25. *Jesus saith unto them, &c.]* Καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς· Τὰν ἀρχῶν ὅτι, καὶ λαλῶ ὑμῖν. Πολλὰ ἔχω πρὸς ὑμᾶς λαλεῖν καὶ κρῖναι. Raphéus (Ex. Herod. p. 292:) would have this sentence pointed in such a manner as to give this translation : *Truly, because I am speaking to you, I have many things to say and judge concerning you.* For, as Gualtero, Hottinger, Fabricius, &c. have observed, *τὴν ἀρχὴν*, in the Greek, frequently signifies (*propterea, ideo*) *indeed, truly.*



know both who I am, and who my Father is. The miracles accompanying my death, my resurrection from the dead, the effusion of the Spirit on my disciples, and the destruction of your nation, shall demonstrate that I am the light of the world, and that I do nothing by my own authority, but by my Father's direction; speaking such doctrines only as he has commissioned me to teach. Besides, my Father is always with me; for though I shall be crucified as a malefactor, that disaster will not come upon me because he has deserted me. In no period of my ministry, not even at my death, will my Father leave me; for I always act agreeably to his will. 29. *And he that hath sent me is with me; the Father hath not left me alone, for I do always those things that please him.* 30. *As he spake these words, many believed on him,* believed him to be the Messiah. It would seem that by the *lifting of him up*, which he said would convince them that he was Messiah, they did not understand his crucifixion, but his exaltation to the throne and kingdom of David. Hearing him therefore speak of a temporal kingdom, as they supposed, they began now to think he entertained sentiments worthy of Messiah, and on that account acknowledged him as such, believing the doctrine he had delivered concerning his mission.

Jesus knowing that the thoughts and views of those who now believed on him, were for the most part carnal, judged it proper to undeceive them. John viii. 31. *Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed:* 32. *\* And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free:* If you persevere in the belief and practice of my word, ye are really my *disciples*, and have a title to that honourable appellation. Moreover, ye shall be fully instructed in every doctrine of the gospel, called here by way of eminence *the truth*. And so being related to me as my disciples, and understanding my gospel, ye shall be made free, not only from the slavery of sin and all its consequences, but from the ceremonial performances enjoined by Moses, under which at present you groan; nay, ye shall even have a just sense and high relish of civil liberty. Accordingly, it has ever been found in fact that those who understand the doctrines of Christianity best, are the greatest friends to the *liberties of mankind*. John viii. 33. *They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man.* This, in the literal sense, was absolutely false, for at that very time they were in bondage to the Romans; and their ancestors had been slaves, first in Egypt, and afterwards in Assyria and Babylon. But the Jews meant to say, they never had been in spiritual bondage, knowing it was that only which Jesus spake of,

\* Ver. 32. *Know the truth.*] The gospel here, and elsewhere, is called *truth*, particularly John i. 14. in opposition to the ceremonial law, which was only its shadow, or an emblematical representation of the gospel.



of, when he told them that *the truth*, which as his disciples they should be instructed in, would make them free. It was therefore a freedom by truth, or a freedom in respect of religion, which they now asserted. They were the descendents of a noble and illustrious stock, that during the worst times had preserved sentiments in religion and government worthy of the posterity of Abraham, and had not by the hottest persecution of the Syrian kings, been compelled to embrace heathenism. In respect of truth, *we were never in bondage to any man; how sayest thou then, Ye shall be made free?* 34. *Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, \* whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin*: There are no greater slaves than those who give themselves up to a vicious course of life, and to the gratification of their sinful appetites. You yourselves therefore may judge whether or no ye be free. 32. *And the servant abideth not in the house for ever, but the Son abideth for ever*: As a slave cannot be so assured of his master's favour, as to depend upon it that he shall never be turned out of the family, since it is always his master's right, and in his power to sell or keep him as he shall think fit, so my Father can, when he pleases, turn you who are habitual sinners out of his family, and deprive you of the outward economy of religion in which you glory, because through sin you have made yourselves bondmen to his justice. Whereas, if you will become God's children, you shall be sure of remaining in his family for ever. And the only way to arrive at the blessed relation, is to submit to the authority of his Son, believing his precepts; in which case, the Son will adopt you as coheirs with himself. 36. † *If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed*: Ye shall be free from the slavery of sin, free to do good, free in respect of your right to the inheritance, and free in your possession of present privileges, remaining in the house of God, without danger of being ever thrust out. John viii. 37. *I know that ye are Abraham's seed, but ye seek to kill me, because my word ‡ hath no place in you*: I know that ye are the seed of Abraham, by natural descent, but morally ye are the offspring of

\* Ver. 34. *Whosoever committeth sin, &c.*] Πᾶσι ἀμαρταν, *worketh sin*, Ruth ii. 19. *is under a habit of sinning*, Eph. iii. 4. 6.

† Ver. 36. *If the Son therefore shall make you free, &c.*] Dr Tillotson, vol. iii. p. 615. is of opinion, that there is here an allusion to a custom which prevailed in certain cities of Greece, where the son and heir had a right to adopt brothers, and give them the privileges of the family. But I rather imagine, that the allusion is to something more generally known. For as in all countries, sons succeed their fathers in the possession of their estates, such slaves as gained the good will of the son, by their obliging behaviour during his minority, were sure to be well treated by him when he came to his estate; perhaps might in time obtain their freedom, and even some small share of the inheritance itself.

‡ Ver. 37. *Hath no place in you.*] Οὐ χῶρον ἔχει ἐν ὑμῖν, ἡ προσηγορία, *Non prodest in vobis, nihil profecit vobis.*



of the devil ; as is plain from this, that many of you are endeavouring to kill me, because I enjoin a greater degree of sanctity than you are willing to acquire. In this however I resemble my Father, as in that you resemble yours. 38. *I speak that which I have seen with my Father, and ye do that which you have seen with your father.* 39. *They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father.* Jesus saith unto them, *If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.* 40. *But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God ; this did not Abraham :* If ye were the spiritual progeny of Abraham, ye would resemble that great and good man in his righteousness ; and therefore instead of seeking to take the life of one who is come to you from God with a revelation of his will, ye would believe on him, in imitation of Abraham, who for his faith in all the divine revelations, and his obedience to all the divine commands, however hard they were to flesh and blood, was ennobled with the grand titles of the father of the faithful, and the friend of God. By your deeds ye shew whose children ye are. 41. *Ye do the deeds of your father.* Then said they unto him, *We be not born of fornication, we have one father, even God.* The Jews it seems perceived at length, that Jesus talked not so much of natural as of spiritual lineage, and replied, In that respect undoubtedly we are the children of God, as we be not born of fornication, alluding to the marriage-covenant, which in scripture is represented to have subsisted between God and the Jewish nation, and by which their obligation to reverence, love and obey him, was held forth to them in a lively manner. We are neither idolaters ourselves, nor are we sprung of idolatrous ancestors ; and therefore, in respect of spiritual descent, we are, without dispute, the children of God. Accordingly, God himself calls all the Jewish males his sons, because he was the husband of their parents, Ezek. xxiii. 37. 42. *Jesus said unto them, If God were your father, ye would love me, for I proceeded forth and came from God, neither came I of myself, but he sent me :* An outward profession of true religion signifieth nothing ; you must love it really, otherwise you are not the children of God ; and if you love religion really, you will love me who am come forth from God to reveal it unto you. I assure you I came not of myself, but he sent me ; as is evident from the many proofs of my mission which I am daily giving you. 43. \* *Why do ye not understand my speech ? even because ye cannot bear my word :* What is the reason that you do not comprehend the true meaning

\* Ver. 43. *Why do ye not understand, &c.*] The latter clause of this verse may likewise be pointed and translated interrogatively, *Why do ye not understand my speech ?* λαλῶν, the spiritual style that I make use of. Is it because you cannot hear my word ? cannot give obedience thereto, it being contrary to your lusts ?



meaning of the things which I have spoken to you? I will tell you plainly: it is because the wickedness of your heart is such as renders you incapable of obeying my precepts. (See verse 31.)

44. *Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father you will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own, for he is a liar, and the father of it:* Ye inherit the nature of your father the devil, and therefore ye will gratify the lusts which ye have derived from him: he was the enemy and murderer of mankind from the beginning, and ever since has endeavoured to work their ruin; sometimes by seducing them into sin with his lies, and sometimes by instigating them to kill those whom God sends to reclaim them. Withal, having early departed from holiness and truth, a habit of lying is become perfectly natural to him. Wherefore, being a liar, and the father of it, i. e. the first and greatest liar, when he speaketh a lie, he speaketh what is proper to himself. And ye his children disbelieve me, because instead of soothing you in your sins, and flattering you with lies, I tell you the truth, which like your father ye are utterly averse to. John viii. 45. *And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not.* 46. *Which of you convinceth me of sin, ελεγχει με περι αμαρτιας, convicteth me of sin?* Is there any of you able to shew, that I have not received my commission from God, or that I have done any thing to render me unworthy of belief? Can you shew that I have taught false doctrine, reproved you unjustly for your actions, or committed sin myself? If you cannot, but must acknowledge that my doctrine and life are such as become a messenger of God, what is the reason that you do not believe me? And if, in affirming that I am perfectly free from sin, *I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?* 47. *He that is of God, beareth God's words:* he that is a child of God, humbly receiveth the revelations which God makes of himself by his messengers, and obeys his commandments with pleasure. *Ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God:* Ye reject the revelations and commandments of God delivered by me his messenger, for no other reason but that ye are not the children of God. See ver. 41. 48. *Then answered the Jews and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art*

\* Ver. 48. *Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil.*] The Jews and Samaritans bare a mortal hatred to one another on account of religion. Hence it came to pass, that in common language Couthi, or Samaritan, was used to signify not merely a Samaritan by country, but one by principle and disposition, and so denoted oft-times an inveterate enemy to the Jewish nation and religion, and a man of wicked morals. Thus in our own language, a Turk signifies one of a barbarous disposition, and a Jew one who is covetous and rich. *Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil.* *Δημιουσις* and *madman*, in the dialect of Judea, were sometimes phrases of one



*a Samaritan, and hast a devil?* alluding to what they had said, chap. vii. 20. § 76. Thou who callest the children of Abraham the children of the devil, art a most profligate wretch, and either raving mad, or thou must be instigated by some evil spirit to speak as thou dost. 49. *Jesus answered, I have not a devil, but I honour my Father, and ye dishonour me.* 50. *And I seek not mine own glory, there is one that seeketh and judgeth:* I am neither mad nor actuated by a devil, but I honour my Father by speaking the words of truth, which he has sent me to deliver, and therefore ye defame me, in judging and calling me possessed. However, as I do not court applause, your reproaches hurt me not. But, at the same time, I must tell you, that there is one concerned to vindicate my honour, who will punish all who attack it. 51. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, if a man keep my sayings, he shall never see death:* Whosoever obeys my precepts, shall never fall under eternal damnation, (called elsewhere the second death.) And this I declare, that you may be excited to repent; for I earnestly desire your salvation, notwithstanding you have done me the greatest injury, in seeking my life, and calling me apostate, demoniac, and madman. John viii. 52. *Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets, and thou sayest, If a man keep my sayings, he shall never taste of death.* We know now for certain that thou art mad; for the most righteous persons that ever lived, persons who kept the commandments of God as perfectly as it is possible for men to do, are dead, even Abraham and the prophets, yet thou hast the impudence and folly to affirm, that he who keeps thy precepts shall never die. 53. *Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead; whom makest thou thyself?* Art thou more in favour with God than Abraham and the prophets were, who though strict observers of all the divine precepts, were not able to procure an immunity from death for themselves, far less for their followers. 54. *Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing:* If I should speak in praise of myself, you would call it vain and foolish, and say to me as the Pharisees did lately, ver. 13. "Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true." Wherefore, instead of giving a full description of my dignity, I shall only tell

and the same import. Thus. John x. 20. *διεφύμασεν αὐτὸν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι*. Yet I will not deny, that our Lord's hearers might mean that he spake by the instigation of some evil spirit, for, on other occasions, we find them attributing his miracles to Beelzebub. However, as it was highly provoking to Israelites to be told, that they were not the children of God, and as Jesus had often, in the course of this conversation, divested them of that glory, nay, had expressly called them the children of the devil, it is no wonder, considering the passions of evil men, that they now fell into a downright rage, and reviled him with the most opprobrious language.



tell you, that it is my Father that speaketh honourably of me, by the miracles which he enables me to perform, by the descent of his Spirit upon me at my baptism, and by his voice uttered from heaven declaring me to be his beloved Son. This, I think, may be sufficient to convince you that I am able to do for my disciples what I said, especially when I tell you farther, that my Father is he whom this nation pretends to worship as its God. *It is my Father that honoureth me, of whom ye say, that he is your God.* 55. *Yet ye have not known him, but I know him; and if I should say I know him not, I should be a liar like unto you; but I know him, and keep his saying:* Though you profess to worship my Father as your God, you are ignorant of him. You neither form right conceptions of him, nor acknowledge him in the manner you ought to do; so that you give the lie to your profession. And though you may reckon it vain glory, yet I must tell you, that if I should say I do not think justly of him, nor acknowledge him as he deserves, I should be a liar like unto you; for I both entertain proper apprehensions of him, and obey his laws. This clause plainly shews, that the sense given of the former is just; for Christ is not speaking here of a speculative, but a practical knowledge of God. 56. *Your father Abraham rejoiced,* or, as it \* may be translated, “earnestly desired,” *to see my day,* the time when I the promised seed should come, in whom all nations were to be blessed, by being † converted from idolatry to the knowledge and worship of the true God. He earnestly desired to see the great transactions of my life, by which this blessing was to be procured for all nations, and to take a view of the happy state unto which the world would be brought when this blessing was bestowed upon them. *And he saw it, and was glad:* by the favour of a particular revelation, Abraham had a distinct foresight of the principal transactions of my life, together with a clear view of the happy state into which I will bring the world, and was exceedingly transported with the prospect. If you ask then an account of my person and character, you may form some notion of both from the disposition with which Abraham regarded me. Our Lord, therefore, plainly enough

\* The translation proposed above is founded on an observation of the critics, who tell us, that the Greek word *συνάλλισσασκε*, signifies to leap forward with joy to meet the object of one’s wishes, as well as to exult in the possession thereof. Accordingly the ancient versions, particularly the Syriac, render it by words which express earnest desire.

† Conversion from idolatry to the knowledge and worship of the true God, was the great blessing bestowed on Abraham himself. It is therefore reasonable to believe, that that patriarch, who is so highly celebrated for his extensive views of the divine perfections and providence, distinctly affixed this idea to the promise concerning his seed; and that by all nations being blessed in his seed, he understood the happiness they were to enjoy through the knowledge and practice of true religion, published to them by Messiah.



enough assumed the character of Messiah on this occasion. John viii. 57. *Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?* Understanding what he said in a natural sense, they thought he affirmed that he lived in the days of Abraham, which they took to be ridiculous nonsense, as he was not arrived at the age of fifty; for they had no conception of his divinity, notwithstanding he had told them several times, that he was the Son of God. Jesus, therefore, finding them thus stupid and perverse, asserted his own dignity yet more plainly. 58. *Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily I say unto you, "Before Abraham was, I am."* 59. *Then they took up stones to cast at him:* The Jews thinking him a blasphemer, because he made himself not only greater than Abraham, but equal with God, John v. 18, fell into a violent rage, and, as Dr Clagget expresses it, reckoning him not worthy to be answered any other way, than by an immediate and zealous attempt upon his life, they took up the stones that happened to be lying thereabouts for the reparation of the temple, and being in a great fury, were going with one accord to have rushed on him, and murdered him outright. But Jesus, making himself invisible, passed through the crowd, and so escaped safe. *But Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.* Le Clerc thinks the word *unhurt* should be supplied here to prevent a needless repetition, which perhaps was the reason that in

\* Ver. 58. *Before Abraham was, I am.*] Πρὶν Ἀβραάμ γινώσκειν ἐγώ εἰμι. Erasmus and Raphelius would have this clause translated, *Before Abraham was born, I was.* In which perfect sense we find the present tense *εἰμι* used, John xiv. 9. *τοσούτοις χρόνοις μετ' ὑμῶν εἰμι, Have I been so long with you?* Also Cyropæd. p. 582. edit. Hutch. *ἐξ οὗ ἐν τῇ ἀρχῇ εἰμι, From the time I have been in power.* Most of the oriental languages having only two tenses, the present and the future, the present was often used to denote the past time, an idiom which the Easterns in writing Greek naturally preserved, notwithstanding the Greek language abounds in tenses. The critics, however, who make this observation, apply it differently in the present case. For some of them contend, that the substantive verb *εἰμι*, in this construction, contains an allusion to the name by which God made himself known to Moses in the bush, Exod. iii. 14. *I am that I am;* consequently, that our Lord, upon this occasion, attributed to himself proper divinity: and, to illustrate their conjecture, they adduce the phrase, Heb. i. 12. *οὐδὲ ὁ αὐτός ἐστι.* Nay, Beza goes so far as to think it comprehends even Christ's humanity, which he affirms was before Abraham in the decree of God, who calls that which is not as if it was, Rom. iv. 8. The Socinians, contrary to the natural meaning of the words, translate the passage thus: *Before Abraham was made Abraham, i. e. the father of many nations, in the spiritual sense of the promise, I am the Messiah.* Grotius and others are of opinion, that our Lord only affirms of himself that he was before Abraham in the divine decree. But this sense of the passage is trifling, if our Lord was no more than a man, it being certain, that all creatures of whatever order, existed equally soon in the divine decree. Besides, that our Lord did truly exist at the time mentioned in the text, is plain likewise from chap. xvii. 5.



in several MSS. the whole latter clause is omitted, viz. *going through the midst of them, and so passed by.*

§ LXXVIII. *The man that was born blind, is sent by Jesus to wash in the pool of Siloam, and there receives his sight. This miracle makes a great noise in Jerusalem, and is examined by the senate. See Antiq. Disc. i. chap. 5. John ix. 1,—34.*

As Jesus and his disciples were fleeing from the Jews, they found a blind beggar (see ver. 8.) in one of the streets of the city, who to move peoples compassion, told them he was born in that miserable condition. The disciples on hearing this, asked their Master, whether it was the man's own sin, or the sin of his parents, which had occasioned his blindness from the womb. John ix. 1. *And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. 2. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?* It seems the Jews having derived from the Egyptians the \*doctrines of the pre-existence and transmigration of souls (see Wisdom viii. 19, 20, &c.) supposed that men were punished in this world for the sins they had committed in their pre-existent state. Jesus told them, that it was neither for the man's own sin, nor for the sin of his parents, that he had been born blind. 3. *Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents; but he was born blind that the works of God should be made manifest in him:* particularly his sovereignty in bringing him into the world blind, his power in conferring the faculty of sight upon him, and his goodness in bearing witness to the doctrine by which men are to be saved. 4. *I must work the works of him that sent me,* called in the preceding verse the works of God, *while it is day,* while I have an opportunity, *the night cometh when no man can work.* It was now the sabbath-day, and Jesus was about to perform a miracle, in which there was to be a small degree of servile work done. Clay was to be made of earth and spittle, and the blind man's eyes were to be anointed with it. Wherefore, before he began, he told his disciples that they needed not be surprised when they saw him perform miracles of

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\* Doctrines of the pre-existence and transmigration of souls.] From the account which Josephus gives of this matter, it appears the Pharisees believed that the souls of good men only went into other bodies, whereas the souls of the wicked they thought went immediately into eternal punishment; an opinion somewhat different from that which the disciples expressed on this occasion. For if they spake accurately, they must have thought, that in his pre-existent state this person had been a sinner, and was now punished for his sins then committed, by having his soul thrust into a blind body. Nevertheless, from what they say we cannot certainly determine, whether they thought that in his pre-existent state this person had lived on earth as a man, which is the notion Josephus describes, (see Jewish Antiq. Disc. I. chap. i. § 2.) or whether they fancied he had pre-existed in some higher order of being, which was the Platonic notion,



that kind on the sabbath. For though they might imagine that he could easily defer them till the holy rest was over, he had so little time to remain on earth, that he was obliged to embrace every opportunity of working miracles that offered. Besides, Jesus might chuse to work this miracle on the sabbath, knowing that the time when it was performed would occasion it to be more strictly enquired into by the Pharisees, and of consequence would tend to make it more generally known. And because he was going to confer sight on a man that was born blind, he took occasion from thence to speak of himself as one appointed to give sight likewise unto the darkened minds of men \*. 5. *As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.* Perhaps our Lord, by calling himself the light of the world, insinuated also to his disciples, that they might safely have believed the lawfulness of the action, though they had had no other evidence of it but that it was done by him. John ix. 6. *When he had thus spoken, † he spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay.* 7. *And said* unto

\* Hence we learn, that our Lord's miracles were designed not only as proofs of his mission, but to be specimens of the power which he possessed as Messiah. For example, by feeding the multitude with meat that perished, he signified that he was come to quicken and nourish mankind with the *bread of life*, that sovereign cordial and salutary nutriment of the soul. His giving sight to the blind was a lively emblem of the efficacy of his doctrine to illuminate the blinded understandings of men. His healing their bodies, represented his power to heal their souls, and was a specimen of his authority to forgive sins, as it was a real, though but a partial removal of its punishment. His casting out devils, was an earnest of his final victory over Satan and all his associates. His raising particular persons from the dead, was the beginning of his triumphs over death, and a demonstration of his ability to accomplish a general resurrection. And, to give no more examples, his curing all promiscuously who applied to him, shewed that he was come not to condemn the world, but to save even the chief of sinners. Accordingly, at performing these miracles, or soon after, when the memory of them was fresh in the minds of his hearers, we often find him turning his discourse to the spiritual things that were signified by them, as in the case before us. So likewise Luke iv. 28. § 24. Matt. ix. 5. § 33. John vi. 27. 35. § 62. Luke x. 17, 18. § 81. John ix. 39. § 84.

† Ver. 6. *He spat on the ground, &c.*] We are not to imagine that he did this because it any way contributed towards the cure. Like the other external actions which accompanied his miracles, it was designed to signify to the blind man that his sight was coming to him, not by accident, but by the gift of the person who spake to him. The general reason which Cyril has assigned for Christ's touching the lepers, his taking hold of the dead, his breathing on the apostles when he communicated to them the Holy Ghost, and such like bodily actions wherewith he accompanied his miracles, may be mentioned here. He thinks that our Lord's body was, by the inhabitation of the divinity, endued with a vivifying quality, to shew men in a visible manner, that his human nature was by no means to be excluded out of the business of their salvation.



unto him, *Go wash in the pool of \* Siloam (which is by interpretation Sent).* He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing. From ver. 11. it appears, that this beggar knew that it was Jesus who spake to him; probably he distinguished him by his voice, having formerly heard him preach, or he might know him by the information of the disciples. Hence he cheerfully submitted to the operation, though in itself a very improper means of obtaining sight, and obeyed without scruple, when Jesus bade him go and wash his eyes in the waters of Siloam, entertaining no doubt of his miraculous power. John ix. 8. *The neighbours therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged?* Those who lived in this beggar's neighbourhood, and those who had frequently

\* Ver. 7. *Siloam. which is by interpretation Sent.*] Concerning these waters the evangelist observes, that their name *Siloam*, or according to the Hebrew orthography *Shiloah*, signifies *a thing that is sent*. This remark Grotius, Dr Clarke, and others, think was designed to insinuate that Christ's command to the blind man was symbolical, teaching him that he owed his cure to Messiah, one of whose names was *Shiloh*, the Sent of God. The waters here mentioned came from a spring that was in the rocks of mount Sion, and were gathered into two great basins, the lower called the pool of fleeces, and the upper Shiloah, Neh. iii. 15. because the waters that filled it were sent to them by the goodness of God, from the bowels of the earth; for in Judea springs of water being very rare, were esteemed peculiar blessings. Hence the waters of Siloah were made by the prophet a type of David's descendents, and among the rest of Messiah, Isa. viii. 5. and the two basins which received these waters are called *the wells of salvation*, Isa. xii. 3. Christ's benefits are fitly represented by the image of water, for his blood purifies the soul from the foulest stains of sin, just as water cleanses the body from its defilements. Moreover, his doctrine imparts wisdom, and affords refreshment to the spirit, like that which cool draughts of water impart to one who is ready to faint away with thirst and heat. But beside the emblematical reason mentioned by the evangelist, Jesus might order the blind man to go and wash in the pool of Siloam, because there were generally great numbers of people there, who seeing the man led thither blind, having his eyes bedaubed with clay, must have gathered round him to inquire into the cause of so strange an appearance. These having examined the man, and found that he was stone-blind, they could not but be prodigiously struck with his relation, when after washing in the pool, they saw the new faculty instantly imparted to him; especially if his relation was confirmed by the person who led him, as in all probability it would be. For it is reasonable to suppose, that his conductor was one of them who stood by, when Jesus anointed his eyes, and ordered him to wash them in Siloam. Accordingly, when he went away, and washed, and came seeing, i. e. walked by the assistance of his own eyes without being led, the miracle was earnestly and accurately inquired into by all his acquaintance, and was so universally known that it became the general topic of conversation at Jerusalem, as the evangelist informs us, ver. 8, 9. nay, it was accurately examined by the literati there. For the man was brought before them; they looked at his eyes; they inquired what had been done to them; they sent for his parents to know from them if he had been really born blind: and they excommunicated the man because he would not join them in saying that Jesus, who had cured him, was an impostor.



ly passed by where he used to beg, being well acquainted with his form and visage, were astonished at the alteration which they observed in his countenance, by reason of the new faculty that was bestowed upon him. Wherefore, they expressed their surprise, by asking one another if this was not the blind man to whom they used to give alms. 9. *Some said, This is he; others said, He is like him; but he said, I am he.* 10. *Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened?* 11. *He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus, made clay and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash; and I went and washed, and I received sight.* 12. *Then said they unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not\*.*

The cure performed upon the man that was born blind, being much talked of in Jerusalem, and the man himself being brought by his neighbours before the council, as the proper judges of this affair, who best were able to discover any cheat that might be in it, they set about examining the matter, with a firm resolution, if possible, to blast the credit of the miracle. Nevertheless, on the strictest scrutiny, they were not able to find the least fault with it; their own eyes convinced them that the man really saw, and all his neighbours and acquaintance testified with one voice, that he had been blind from his birth, see ver. 18. They felt to work therefore another way; they asked the beggar by what

\* Some harmony writers are of opinion, that our Lord could not well answer the questions of his disciples about the cause of the beggar's blindness, or perform miracles, whilst he was fleeing from the Jews, who endeavoured to stone him in the temple; and therefore they place the cure of this blind man immediately before the feast of Dedication. But the foundation on which they build their opinion will hardly support it. The power by which Christ escaped, might easily screen both him and his disciples from the hottest pursuit of their enemies. Yet we need not have recourse to any miracle here, seeing it is not said that they found the blind man immediately on their coming out of the temple, but as they were escaping; so that, for any thing we know, they may have found him at a considerable distance from the temple, perhaps on the other side of the town, as they were going into the country. Mr Whiston's opinion seems to be better founded; he thinks that the rage of the Jews being heightened by the miracle which Jesus performed as he fled from them, he found it expedient to leave Jerusalem instantly; that in his absence the council tried and excommunicated the man who was the subject of that miracle; and that Jesus did not meet with him till he came up to the feast of Dedication. This method of harmony is favoured by John x. 22. and is not contrary to chap. ix. 35. In the former passage, the Evangelist seems to say, that it was the feast of Dedication when Jesus made himself known to the man that was born blind, under the character of Messiah. In the latter he does not connect that discovery with the sentence passed upon the man by the council; and therefore, though he was excommunicated at the feast of Tabernacles, we may suppose that Jesus did not discover himself to him till the feast of Dedication, which happened about two months after the miracle was performed.



what means he had been made to see. John ix. 13. \* *They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind.* 14. *And it was the sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes.* This phrase shews that the man's blindness proceeded not from any fault or defect in the organs of vision, but from his wanting these altogether. His eye-lids were grown together or contracted, as is the case with those who are born without eyes. Hence Jesus is said to have *opened the man's eyes*, to intimate that in this miracle, he made, rather than recovered his organs of vision. 15. *Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight.* They hoped to find something in the manner of the cure which would shew it to be no miracle, or at least which would prove Jesus to be a bad man. The man honestly and plainly told them the whole matter; that he had made clay, put it upon his eyes, and ordered him to go and wash in Siloam. *He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see.* On hearing this account of the miracle, the Pharisees declared that the author of it was certainly an impostor, because he had violated the sabbath in performing it. Nevertheless, others of them, more candid in their way of thinking, gave it as their opinion, that no deceiver could possibly do a miracle of that kind, because it was too great and beneficial for any evil being to have either the inclination or the power to perform. 16. *Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them.* The court being thus divided in their opinion with respect to the character of Jesus, they asked the man himself what he thought of the author of his cure. 17. *They said unto † the blind man again, What sayest thou of him that hath opened thine eyes? He said, He is a prophet:* But the Jews, hoping to make the whole turn out a cheat, would not believe that the beggar was born blind, although all his neighbours had testified the truth of it, pretending, no doubt, that it was a common trick of

\* Ver. 13. *They brought to the Pharisees him, &c.]* By the Pharisees here we are to understand the council or senate of Israel. For though the name *Pharisee* was the denomination of a sect, we learn from Josephus, that the people of this sect chiefly managed all public affairs. (See Jewish Antiq. Disc. I. chap. v. § 1.) That some court of judicature is meant, when we are told that *they brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind*, is plain from their passing the sentence of excommunication upon him, ver. 34. and that the senate or supreme court is meant, is probable from their being called *the Jews*, ver. 18. 21. and from their having made a decree, that whoever confessed Jesus to be the Christ should be excommunicated, ver. 22.

† Ver. 17. *The blind man.]* He is so named after having received his sight, agreeably to the Scripture phraseology. Thus, Matt. x. 3. Matthew is called *the publican* after he had left off that employment, and, Matt. xxvi. 6. Simon is called *the leper* after he was cured.



of beggars to feign themselves blind, and that this one in particular was in a combination with Jesus, to advance his reputation, (see ver. 18.) a circumstance which they urged from the favourable opinion he had expressed of him. Wherefore, they called his parents, and inquired of them, first, if he was their son; next, if he had been born blind; and then, by what means he had obtained sight. They answered, that most certainly he was their son, and had been born blind; but with respect to the manner in which he had received sight, and the person who had conferred it upon him, they could give no information, only their son being of age would answer for himself. John ix. 18. *But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight.* 19. *And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who you say was born blind? how then doth he now see?* 20. *His parents answered them and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind;* 21. *But by what means he now seeth we know not, or who hath opened his eyes we know not: he is of age, ask him, he shall speak for himself.* As the man that had been blind knew who had opened his eyes, without doubt he had given his parents an account, both of the name of his benefactor, and of the manner in which he had conferred the great blessing upon him; besides, having repeated these particulars frequently to his neighbours and acquaintance, who were all curious to hear him relate the miracle (ver. 11.) we can conceive no reason why he should conceal them from his parents. The truth is, they lied grossly, and were ungrateful to Jesus in concealing his name on this occasion; but they were afraid to utter the least word which might seem to favour him, because by an act of the court it was resolved, that whosoever acknowledged Jesus to be the Christ should be excommunicated. 22. *These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be \* put out of the synagogue.* 23. *Therefore said*

\* Ver. 22. *Put out of the synagogue.*] The Jews had two sorts of excommunication, one was what they called *Niddai*, which separated the person under it four cubits from the society of others, so that it hindered him from conversing familiarly with them, (see Buxtorff. in voc. *Niddai*, p. 1306.) but left him free at that distance, either to expound, or hear the law expounded in the synagogue. There was another kind of excommunication called *Shematta*, from *shem*, which signifies a name in general, but by way of eminence was appropriated to God, whose awful name denotes all possible perfection. *Shematta* therefore answers to the Syrian *maranatta*, *the Lord cometh*, a form of execration used by the apostle Paul, 1 Cor. xvi. 22. and supposed to be derived from Enoch, because Jude quotes a saying of his, which begins with the word *maranatta*; ver. 14. *Behold, the Lord cometh, with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, &c.* This kind of excommunication is said to have excluded the person under it



said his parents, *He is of age, ask him.* They refused to bear testimony unto Jesus, for fear of being excommunicated. The court finding that nothing was to be learned from the man's parents by which the miracle could be disproved, called the man himself a second time, and tried by fair words to extort from him a confession to the disparagement of Jesus. 24. *Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner.* Give glory to God, in whose presence you now are, by making a full confession of your fraud and collusion with this man, for we know that he is an impostor, and have all the reason in the world to believe that you are his accomplice. See Josh. vii. 19. where the Jewish general adjures Achan in similar terms to confess his sin. 25. *He answered and said, Whether be he a sinner or no, I know not; one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see.* In this answer of the beggar, there is a strong and beautiful irony, founded on good sense; and therefore it must have been felt by the doctors, though they dissembled their resentment for a little, hoping that by gentle means they might prevail with him to confess the supposed fraud of this miracle. They desired him therefore to tell them again how it had been performed. 26. *Then said they to him again, What did he do to thee? how opened he thine eyes?* They had asked this question before, ver. 15. but they proposed it a second time, in order that the man, repeating his account of the servile work performed at the cure, might become sensible that Jesus had violated the sabbath thereby, and was an impostor. Thus Christ's enemies would gladly have prevailed with the subject of the miracle, to join them in the judgment which they passed upon the author of it. But their resistance of the truth appeared so criminal to him, that laying aside fear he spoke

it from the synagogue for ever. We have the form of it, Ezra x. 7. Neh. xiii. 25. being that which was inflicted on those Jews who refused to repudiate their strange wives. It seems to have been the censure also which the council threatened against those who should acknowledge Jesus to be Messiah, and which they actually inflicted on the beggar; for the words *ἐξῆλθον αὐτον*, ver. 34. 35. agree better to this kind than to the other. Probably also it was *the shematta* that our Lord speaks of, when he said to his disciples, John xvi. 2. *ἀποσυρῶσιν ὑμᾶς ὑμᾶς*, they shall put you out of the synagogues. Selden has treated of the word *ἀποσυρῶσιν* at great length, De Synedriis, lib. i. cap. 7. According to him the synagogue, from which persons under this censure were excluded, was every assembly whatever, whether religious or civil, the excommunicated person not being allowed to converse familiarly with his brethren, although he was not excluded either from public prayers or sacrifices. But in this latter opinion Selden has not many followers. The excommunications of the primitive Christians seem to have resembled those of the Jews in several particulars; for they excluded excommunicated persons from their religious assemblies, and from all communion in sacred things; and when they restored them to the privileges of the faithful, it was with much difficulty, and after a severe and long penance.



spoke to them with great freedom. John ix. 27. *He answered them, I have told you already, and you did not bear, i. e. believe, wherefore would you bear it again? will ye also be his disciples?* In this answer the irony was more plain and severe. Are ye so affected with the miracle, and do ye entertain so high an opinion of the author of it, that ye take pleasure in hearing the account of it repeated, desiring to be more and more confirmed in your veneration for him? These words provoked the rulers to the highest pitch. 28. *Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple, as is plain from the partiality thou discoverest towards him, but we are Moses' disciples.* And with great reason, for Moses clearly demonstrated his mission from God; whereas this fellow, who contradicts Moses, and breaks his laws by his pretended cures performed on the sabbath, giving no proof of his mission, must be an impostor, and therefore deserves no credit. 29. *We know that God spake unto Moses; as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is.* The beggar replied, It is exceedingly strange that you should not acknowledge the divine mission of a teacher, who performs such astonishing miracles; for common sense declares, that God never assists impostors in working miracles. Accordingly, since the world began, no example can be given of any such person's opening the eyes of one born blind. My opinion therefore, since ye will have it, is, that if this man was not sent by God, he could do no miracle at all. 30. *The man answered and said unto them, Why, herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes.* 31. *Now we know that God beareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshipper of God, and do his will, him he beareth.* 32. *Since the world began was it not heard that any man that is not a worshipper of God, and a doer of his will, i. e. any sinner, any impostor, opened the eyes of one that was born blind.* 33. *If this man were not of God, were not sent of God, if he were not a prophet and messenger of God, he could do nothing.* Thus the beggar, though illiterate, answered that great body of learned men with such strength of reason, that they had not a word to reply. However, the evidence of his arguments had no other effect but to put them into a passion, insomuch, that they railed at him, and excommunicated him. 34. *They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? Thou wicked, illiterate, impudent fellow, whose understanding continues still as blind as thy body was, and who wast born under the heaviest punishments of sin, dost thou pretend to instruct us in a matter of this kind; us, who are the guides of the people, and eminent for our skill in the law? And they cast him out, i. e. they passed the sentence of excommunication upon him, which was the highest punishment in their power to inflict.*



From this passage of the history we learn, that a plain man void of the advantages of learning and education, but who has honest dispositions, is in a fairer way to understand truth, than a whole council of learned doctors, who are under the power of prejudice.

**LXXIX.** *Jesus, in his way to the feast of dedication, is refused lodging in a village of the Samaritans. The disciples desire him to call fire down from heaven upon the Samaritans: He rebukes the disciples for their wrathful spirit, and goes to another village. Luke ix. 51,—62.*

ABOUT this time the feast of dedication approached, a solemnity not appointed by the law of Moses, but by that heroic reformer Judas Maccabeus, in commemoration of his having cleansed the temple, and restored its worship, after both had been profaned by Antiochus Epiphanes. But although this feast was of human institution, and Jesus foresaw that farther attempts would be made upon his life in Jerusalem, he did not shun it, but went thither with great resolution. Luke explains the reason of this boldness: He had now continued on earth very near the whole period determined, and was soon to be taken up to heaven, from whence he had come down. He therefore resolved, from this time forth, to appear as openly as possible, and to embrace every opportunity of fulfilling the duties of his ministry. Luke ix. 51. *And it came to pass, that \* when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem.* He did not travel thither privately, as he had often done before, but he declared his intention, and entered on the journey with great courage. The road to Jerusalem from Galilee lay through Samaria; wherefore, as the inhabitants of this country bore the greatest ill-will to all who worshipped in Jerusalem, (see Jewish Antiquities, Disc. iii.) Jesus thought it necessary to send messengers before him, with orders to find out quarters for him in one of the villages; but the inhabitants refused to receive him, because his intention in this journey was publicly known. Luke ix. 52. *And sent messengers before his face; and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him. 53. And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem.* The Samaritans could not refuse lodging to all the travellers that went to Jerusalem, for the high road lay through their country; such travellers only as went

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\* Ver. 51. *When the time was come, &c.*] Εἰς τὴν συμπληρωθεῖσαν, when the time was fulfilled, that is, according to the Hebrew idiom, *drew on*. The Greek word ἀναλυσίς, in this passage, signifies Christ's being taken up into heaven; for we find ἀναλαμβάνωμαι, from whence it is derived, applied expressly to his ascension. Matt. xvi. 19. Acts i. 7: xi. 22. 1 Tim. ii. 6.



thither professedly to worship, were the objects of their indignation: hence the expression, *because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem*, must imply that his design of worshipping in Jerusalem was known to the Samaritans.

When the messengers returned with an account of what had passed in the village whither they had been sent, the two disciples James and John being exceedingly incensed at this rude treatment, proposed to call for fire from heaven, which should destroy those inhospitable wretches immediately, after the example of the prophet Elijah, who thus destroyed the men who had evil intreated him. Luke ix. 54. *And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, even as Elias did?* But Jesus, whose meekness on all occasions was admirable, sharply reprimanded his disciples for entertaining so unbecoming a resentment of this offence. 55. *But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. Ye do not know the fulfulness of the disposition which ye have just now expressed, neither do ye consider the difference of times, persons, and dispensations.* The severity which Elijah exercised on the men who came from Ahaziah to apprehend him, was a reproof of an idolatrous king, court, and nation, very proper for the times, and very agreeable to the characters both of the prophet who gave it, and of the offenders to whom it was given; at the same time it was not unsuitable to the nature of the dispensation they were under. But the gospel breathes a different spirit from the law, whose punishments and rewards were all of a temporal kind, and therefore it does not admit of this sort of rigour and severity. He told them farther, that to destroy mens lives was utterly inconsistent with the design of his coming into the world: 56. *For the Son of man is not come to destroy mens lives, but to save them:* alluding to his miracles, by which he restored health to the diseased bodies of men, as well as to his doctrine and death, by which he gives life to their souls. Having said these things, he went with them to another village, the inhabitants of which were men of better dispositions. *And they went to another village.* This was a noble instance of patience under a real and unprovoked injury; an instance of patience which expressed infinite sweetness of disposition, and which for that reason should be imitated by all who call themselves Christ's disciples.

Luke ix. 57. *And it came to pass, that as they went in the way, that is, as they went to the other village of the Samaritans, mentioned in the preceding verse, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.* But Jesus knowing that the man proposed to himself riches and honours, and all kind of pleasures, in the expected kingdom, thought fit



fit to make him sensible of his mistake. 58. *And Jesus said unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.* About the same time, our Lord meeting with one who had often attended him, and thereby shewed an inclination to become his disciple, he ordered him to disengage himself altogether from worldly affairs, and follow him; but the man excused himself, on pretence that he was bound in duty to wait on an aged father, till he should pay him the last office in his burial. 59. *And he said unto another, Follow me; but he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.* 60. *Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: let those who are immersed in worldly affairs, follow worldly affairs, but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.*—Unto a third, who of his own accord offered to follow him, if he would allow him to go home and take leave of his family, Jesus gave such an answer as teaches us, that no domestic affair should hinder the care of our salvation; that the calls of religion are so very pressing, that they admit of no delay or excuse whatsoever; and that all who set themselves to seek the welfare of their souls should pursue the work assiduously, without looking carelessly around them, as if they neglected what they are doing. 61. *And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house.* 62. *And Jesus said unto him, No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God, fit to preach the kingdom of God\*.*

\* The composers of harmonies have confounded this passage of the history with Matt. viii. 19. See § 31. note, p. 180.

§ LXXX. *Jesus in his way to the feast of the dedication, sends the seventy disciples out; the mean while he himself tarries in Samaria.* Luke x. 1,—16.

THE scene of Christ's ministry being from this time forth, to lie in Judea and the country beyond Jordan, it was expedient that his way should be prepared in every city and village of those countries, whither he was to come. He therefore sent out seventy of his disciples on this work, mentioning the particular places which he intended to visit, and in which they were to preach; whereas, the twelve had been allowed to go where they pleased, provided they confined their ministry to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Luke x. 1. *After these things, the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face, into every city and place whither he himself would come.* 2. *Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth labourers into his harvest,* see Matt. ix. 37. It



It is remarkable, that our Lord assigned the same reason for the mission of the seventy, which he had assigned for the mission of the twelve disciples; the harvest was plenteous in Judea and Perea, as well as in Galilee, and the labourers there also were few.

The instructions given to the seventy on this occasion were nearly the same with those delivered to the twelve; see the commentary on Matt. x. § 40. Only he ordered the seventy to spend no time in saluting such persons as they met on the road, the time assigned them for going through the cities, being but short. 3. *Go your ways; behold I send you forth as lambs among wolves.* 4. *Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes, and \* salute no man by the way:* that is, make all the haste you possibly can. 5. *And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house.* 6. *And if the son of peace be there,* if the master of that house be a virtuous well disposed person, and receives, you kindly, *your peace shall rest upon it:* Your blessing which you gave at your entrance, shall by my power be made effectual to that house; *if not, it shall turn to you again.* See on Matth. x. 12. § 40. 7. *And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give; for the labourer is worthy of his hire.* see on Mat. x. 10, 11. 8. *And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you into their houses, eat such things as they set before you:* be content with any fare you meet with, and give the wicked no reason to think that you are of a luxurious disposition, or set a high value upon the pleasures of the table. 9. *And heal the sick that are therein.* This is not only a direction, but a commission empowering the seventy to work miracles for the confirmation of their doctrine, for it is added, *and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.* 10. *But into whatsoever city ye enter and they receive you not;* shew no willingness to hear your doctrine, and no inclination to give you the necessaries of life; *go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say:* 11. *Even the very dust of your city which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you:* In the most public manner declare that they have sinned in rejecting you: Cry it in their streets. Withal, that your declaration may make the greater impression upon them, accompany it with the symbolical action of publicly wiping the dust of their city from off your feet, as a testimony that you will have no communication with such a wicked people. This

\* Ver. 4. *Salute no man by the way.*] That this phrase implies the greatest dispatch, is evident from 2 Kings iv. 29. where Elisha sending Gehazi to recover the Shunamite's son, commands him to make all the haste possible, in these words: *Gird up thy loins, and take my staff in thine hand, and go thy way: If thou meet any man, salute him not; and if any salute thee, answer him not again:* for the eastern salutations were exceedingly tedious, consisting of long wishes of happiness to the person saluted, and of very particular inquiries concerning his welfare.



This was agreeable to the manners of the Easterns, who taught their disciples by symbolical actions as well as by discourse; see on Matt. x. 14. Jesus added, When you have so done, say, *Notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you*: Though you have rejected us and our message, we solemnly assure you that an offer of the kingdom of God has been made to you. To conclude, to make the seventy very earnest in preaching the gospel, that so if possible the people might be persuaded to receive it, he declared the terrible punishment of those who should reject it. 12. *But I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city.* See on Matt. x. 15. § 40. xi. 24. § 42. Having mentioned the punishment of those cities which should reject his ministers, it naturally brought into his mind the sad state and punishment of the cities where he himself had preached most frequently, namely Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum. For notwithstanding he had often resided in those cities, and performed many miracles before the inhabitants of them, they had continued impenitent. Wherefore, because he was never to preach to them any more, and because he knew how great their punishment would be, in the overflowing tenderness of his soul, he affectionately lamented their obstinacy, which he foresaw would draw down on them the heaviest judgments: 13. *Woe unto thee Chorazin, woe unto thee Bethsaida, for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.* 14. *But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you.* See on Matt. xi. 20, 21, 22. § 42. 15. *And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven by thy spiritual privileges, shalt be thrust down to hell.* See on Matt. xi. 23. § 42. This part of his discourse was well calculated to comfort the seventy under the ill usage they might meet with; the preaching of Christ himself had often been unacceptable and unsuccessful with respect to many of his hearers; and therefore it was not much to be wondered at, if theirs should prove so likewise. 16. *He that beareth you beareth me, and he that despiseth you despiseth me, and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.* See on Matt. x. 40. § 40. \*

\* As it is Luke alone who has mentioned the mission of the seventy disciples, it is he chiefly who has given the history of our Lord's transactions in consequence of that mission; the rest having recorded few or none of them, excepting the things that happened immediately before the pass-over at which he suffered. It is true, indeed, Christ's ministry in Judea did in many things resemble his ministry in Galilee, which may have been the reason, not only that it was omitted by Matthew and Mark, but that it hath always been confounded with the latter by the compilers of harmonies. Nevertheless, when it is considered how long our Lord preached in Galilee, as well as the importance of the subjects upon which he discoursed, it will not appear strange that the sermons which he delivered in

Judea,



Judea, toward the end of his ministry, should have contained many of the sentiments and expressions he had formerly made use of. See Prel. Obser. IV. According to this view of things, our Lord did not confine his ministry to Galilee, and the countries round the lake. He was much in those countries indeed, for the space of three years. But he exercised his ministry a considerable time in Judea and Perea also, by which means all the Israelites, as it is reasonable to believe, enjoyed the benefit of his doctrine and example. And that Luke should have been the only evangelist who has given the history of the mission of the seventy disciples, and of Christ's ministry in consequence of that mission, need not be thought strange, if he published his gospel before the other evangelists wrote theirs, as I have attempted to shew, Prelim. Observ. VII. ch. 1.

§ LXXXI. *The seventy disciples return, and give Jesus an account of their success in working miracles.* Luke x. 17,—24.

THE seventy disciples having gone through the several parts of the country appointed them, returned and told their Master with great joy what they had done, particularly that they had cast out many devils. Luke x. 17. *And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject to us through thy name.* From the manner in which they spake of this latter exertion of their power, it would appear to have been what they did not expect when they set out. For though Jesus had given them power to heal diseases, ver. 9. he had said nothing concerning devils. 18. *And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning \* fall from heaven:* Ye need not wonder that the devils are subject unto you through my name, for Satan their prince is not able to stand before me. This was shewed me at my first appearance in the human nature to destroy him and his works, when I saw him fall from heaven with great violence; I saw him fall from the great power and eminence to which he had exalted himself in the world. Withal, to prove that he had thrown down Satan from his exaltation, and to increase their joy, and to render them more fit for their work, he enlarged their powers. 19. *Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions:* their treading on serpents is a proverbial expression, which signifies victory over enemies (see Bos. Observ. Crit. 108.); accordingly it is added, *and over all the power of the*

\* Ver. 18. *Fall from heaven.*] To be exalted into heaven, signifies to be raised unto great powers and privileges, and particularly to sovereign dominion. To fall from heaven, therefore, may signify to lose one's dominion and pre-eminency. The devils, by the idolatry of the Gentiles and the wickedness of the Jews, had been exalted into heaven, had ruled mankind in opposition to the dominion of God; but by the preaching of the gospel, their power was to be destroyed in every country. But Erasmus gives the words another turn; he thinks they were designed as a caution to the disciples against pride: as if our Lord had said, Ye have great powers bestowed upon you, and ye have been very successful in the exercise of them; be not too much elated on this account, but remember that pride was the sin by which Lucifer fell from his seat in heaven.



*the enemy ; and nothing shall by any means hurt you.* At the same time he told them, that the gift of miracles was not so just a matter of joy, as that their names were written in the book of life, because it was but a temporary pre-eminence, was sometimes granted to wicked men, and no wise qualified them for heaven. Luke x. 20. *Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you ; but rather rejoice, because \* your names are written in heaven.* On this occasion Jesus, meditating upon the unspeakable wisdom and goodness of the divine dispensations to mankind, felt extraordinary emotions of joy. 21. *In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, i. e. † rejoiced greatly, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast bid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes : even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight.* 22. *All things are delivered to me of the Father ; and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father : and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.* (See on Matt. xi. 25. § 42.) 23. *And he turned him unto his disciples, and said privately, (see the beginning of next section) Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see,* 24. *For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them ; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.* See on Matt. xiii. 16. § 49.

It would appear that when the seventy disciples returned, Jesus was surrounded with a great multitude of people. I gather this from ver. 23. where, after having spoken publicly to the seventy, we are told that “ he turned him unto his disciples, and said privately, Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see, for I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them,” &c. The happiness here praised was enjoyed by the seventy as well as by the twelve, and consequently it was as fit that they should be made sensible of its greatness, as that the twelve should understand it. Besides, this declaration, as well as what was spoken more publicly, was designed to moderate the joy which the seventy had conceived, on finding the devils subject to them. The subjection of the devils to their command, was not so great a happiness as their being allowed to hear Christ’s sermons, and to see his miracles. These things shew, that what our Lord said privately to his

\* Ver. 20. *Names are written in heaven* ] Many are of opinion that this is an allusion to the enrolment of citizens names in a register, by which their right to the privileges of citizenship was acknowledged by the community ; and to confirm their opinion, they observe that, Rev. iii. 5. God promises the members of the church of Sardis, that he would not blot their names out of the book of life.

† Ver. 21. *Rejoiced greatly.* ] So the expression *in spirit* signifies, Mark viii. 12. John xi. 33. xiii. 21. Acts xviii. 5. See on Luke i. 47. § 4.



his disciples, was said to the seventy as well as to the twelve ; if so, he was now attended by the multitude. I have been at pains to prove this, because it accounts for the behaviour of the lawyer to be mentioned in the next section.

§ LXXXII. *In Samaria Jesus declares the means of obtaining eternal life. See § 105. 119. The parable of the good Samaritan who took care of the wounded Jew, whom he found lying upon the road to Jericho. Luke x. 25,—37.*

IF the connexion with which Luke introduces the transaction we are going to explain, implies that it happened immediately after what goes before in the history, it took its rise in the following manner. A doctor of the law, who, it seems, made one of the multitude which attended Jesus when the seventy returned, having listened to what he said to his disciples in private, concerning their enjoying a happiness which many prophets and kings had desired in vain to obtain, namely, the happiness of seeing his miracles and of hearing his sermons, thought that he would make trial of that great wisdom which he said he possessed, by proposing to him one of the most important questions which it is possible for the human mind to examine, namely, What a man must do to inherit eternal life. For that this learned doctor asked the question, not from a sincere desire to know his duty, but merely to try our Lord's knowledge, is evident from the text, which informs us that he did it *tempting him*, expecting perhaps that on this head he would teach differently from Moses. Luke x. 25. *And behold a certain lawyer stood up and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life ?* Jesus alluding to his profession, made answer by inquiring of him what the law taught on that point. 26. *He said unto him, What is written in the law ? how readest thou ?* 26. *And he answering, (out of Deut. vi. 5.) said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind ; and thy neighbour as thyself. (See on Mark xii. 30. § 119.)* 28. *And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right ; this do, and thou shalt live,* Jesus approved of his answer ; and allowed that to love God as the law enjoined, is the means of obtaining eternal life, because it never fails to produce obedience to all the divine revelations and commands, consequently obedience even to the gospel which he was then preaching. But the lawyer, willing to justify himself, or shew that he was blameless in respect of the duties which are least liable to be counterfeited, the social and relative duties, asked him what was the meaning and extent of the word *neighbour* in the law. 29. *But he willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour ?* It seems, being strongly tinctured with the prejudices of his nation, he reckoned none *bretbren* but Israelites,



*Isaelites*, or *neighbours* but profelytes, (see on Matt. v. 22. § 26.) and expected that Jesus would confirm his opinion by approving of it. For, according to this interpretation, he thought himself innocent, although enemies and heathens had no share of his love, since the precept enjoined the love of neighbours only. But our Lord, who well knew how to convince and persuade, answered him in such a manner as to make the feelings of his heart overcome the prejudices of his understanding. He convinced him of his mistake by a parable; an ancient, agreeable, and inoffensive method of conveying instruction, very fit to be used in teaching persons who are greatly prejudiced against the truth.

The parable which our Lord now spake was that of the Samaritan, who shewed extraordinary kindness to a distressed Jew, his bitter enemy on account of religion. This Jew, in travelling from Jerusalem to Jericho, fell among robbers, who, not satisfied with taking all the money that he had, stripped him of his raiment, beat him unmercifully, and left him for dead. Luke x. 30. *And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, (λῃσται robbers) which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.* While he was lying in this miserable condition, utterly incapable of helping himself, a certain priest happening to come that way, saw him in great distress, but took no pity on him. In like manner a Levite espying him, would not come near him, having no mind to be at any trouble or expence with him. Luke x. 31. *And by chance there came down a certain priest that way, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.* 32. *And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side: both of them barbarously passed by, without so much as speaking to the poor man.* Thus hard-hearted were these ministers of religion, the priest and the Levite, notwithstanding their sacred characters and eminent knowledge in the law, obliged them to be remarkable for compassion and all the tender offices of charity, especially when it was the distress of a brother which called for their help. In other cases, indeed, these hypocrites might have invented reasons to palliate their inhumanity; but here it was not in their power to do it. They could not excuse themselves by saying this was a Samaritan, or a heathen who deserved no pity; they could not even excuse themselves by saying they did not know who he was; for though they took care to keep at a distance, they had looked on their brother lying stripped, wounded, and half dead, without being in the least moved with his distress. Soon after this, a Samaritan happened to come that way, and seeing a fellow-creature lying on the road naked and wounded, went up to him; and though he found it was one of a different nation, who professed a religion opposite to his own, the vio-



lent hatred of all such persons that had been instilled into his mind from his earliest years, and every objection whatever remained immediately silenced, by the feelings of pity awakened at the sight of the man's distress; his bowels yearned towards the Jew; he hastened with great tenderness to give him assistance. It seems this humane traveller, according to the custom of those times, carried his provisions along with him\*; for he was able, though in the fields, to give the wounded man some wine to recruit his spirits; moreover, he carefully bound up his wounds, soaking the bandages with a mixture of wine and oil, which he poured on them, and which is of a medicinal quality; then setting him on his own beast, he walked by him on foot and supported him. In this manner did the good Samaritan carry the Jew his enemy to the first inn he could find, where he carefully tended him all that night; and on the morrow when he was going away, he delivered him over to the care of the host, with a particular recommendation to be very kind to him. And that  
nothing

\* In ancient times travellers used to carry their provisions along with them, because there were then no inns for the entertainment of strangers, but only houses for lodging them, such as the *khans* or *karavanserais* in the eastern countries are at this day. These, as travellers tell us, consist of a capacious square, on all sides of which are a number of rooms on a ground floor, used occasionally for chambers, warehouses, or stables. Above stairs there is a colonade or gallery, on every side of which are the doors of a number of small rooms, wherein the merchants, as well strangers as natives, transact most of their business. In these caravanserai, travellers can sometimes purchase straw and provender for their horses, mules, or other beasts, though generally speaking they supply them with nothing but rooms to lodge in. The *πανδοχείον*, or inn, mentioned afterwards in the parable, was of this kind; for the Samaritan, while he was there, furnished the wounded Jew with all things necessary out of his own stores, and only committed him to the innkeeper when he went away, with a sum of money, which he desired him to lay out in providing whatever was proper for the man, till his cure was completed, ver. 34, 35. We have two examples in Scripture of the custom just now mentioned: one Matt. xv. 32. where it is said that the multitude spent all their provision, having continued with Jesus in the desert mountain three days; another, Judges xix. 19. where the Levite who travelled home with his concubine, says to the old man that came to him, as he stood in the street of Gibeah, "There is no man that receiveth me to house; yet there is both straw and provender for our asses, and there is bread and wine also for me, and for thy handmaid, and for the young man which is with thy servant; there is no want of any thing."

Dr Shaw, Preface to his Travels, p. 14. mentions another sort of inn, called *connack*. This he says denotes the place itself, whether covered or not, where the travellers or caravans halt, or break off their journey for a time, in order to refresh themselves and their beasts. Thus the *Melon* or inn, Gen. xlii. 27. and xliii. 21. where the sons of Jacob opened their sacks to give their asses provender, was no other than one of the like stations, viz. the place where they themselves rested, and unloaded their asses. In the parable of the Samaritan, it is the other sort of inn that is mentioned, as is plain from its having an innkeeper, which the *connack* in the deserts of Arabia has not.



nothing necessary for his recovery might be wanting, he gave the host what money he could spare, a sum equal to about fifteen pence with us \*, desiring him at the same time to lay out more if more was needful, and promising him to pay the whole at his return. Luke x. 33. *But a certain Samaritan as he journeyed, came where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion on him: 34. And went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. 35. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two-pence, two denarii, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him, and whatsoever thou spendest more when I come again I will repay thee.* As neither the Samaritan nor the host knew, whether the man himself was in condition to defray the charges of his own recovery, he was so charitable that he became bound even for the whole. It seems he was afraid the mercenary temper of the host, might have hindered him from furnishing what was necessary, if he had no prospect of being repaid. Having finished the parable, Jesus said to the lawyer, 36. *Which now of these three thinkest thou was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?* The lawyer, greatly struck with the truth and evidence of the case, replied, without doubt, 37. *He that shewed mercy unto him.* Then Jesus said unto him, *Go, and do thou likewise: shew mercy and kindness to every one that standeth in need of thy assistance, whether he be an Israelite, an heathen, or a Samaritan; and when works of charity are to be performed, reckon every man thy neighbour, not inquiring what he believes, but what he suffers †.*

\* The smallness of the sum which this charitable man left with the host, shews that he was but poor. If so, this circumstance enhances his kindness to the Jew not a little.

† All the circumstances of this beautiful parable are formed with the best skill imaginable, to work the conviction designed, so that had the lawyer been ever so much disposed to reckon none his neighbours but men of his own religion, it was not in his power to do it on this occasion. And although favours from a Samaritan had always been represented to him as an abomination more detestable than the eating of swine's flesh, he was obliged to acknowledge, that not the priest or the Levite, but this Samaritan, by discharging a great office of humanity towards the Jew in distress, was truly his neighbour, and deserved his love more than some of his own nation, who sustained the most venerable characters; that the like humanity was due from any Israelite, to a Samaritan who stood in need of it; and that all men are neighbours to all men, how much soever they may be distinguished from one another in respect of country, or kindred, or language, or religion. Mankind are intimately knit together by their common wants and weaknesses, being so formed that they cannot live without the assistance of each other; and therefore the relation that subsists between them is as extensive as their natures, and the obligations under which they lie to aid one another by mutual good offices, are as strong and urgent as every man's own manifold necessities. By this admirable parable, therefore, our Lord has powerfully recommended that universal benevolence which is so familiar in the mouths, but foreign to the hearts



hearts of many ignorant pretenders to religion and morality. It would appear that the presumption of the Jews in matters of religion exceeded all bounds; for though the supreme Being pays little regard to outward worship, and is much more delighted with the inward homage of an holy and benevolent mind, yet because they prayed daily in his temple, and offered sacrifices there, and carried about his precepts written on their phylacteries, and had God and the law always in their mouths, they made no doubt but they worshipped God acceptably, notwithstanding they were so enormously wicked, that they would not put themselves to the smallest expence or trouble, though they could have saved life by it; and therefore had no real love to God or their neighbour. This monstrous presumption being entirely subversive of true religion, our Lord thought fit to condemn it in the severest manner, and to brand it with the blackest and most lasting note of infamy, in the above charming parable.

As Jesus was now in Samaria, he shewed great humanity as well as justice, in assigning the benevolent charitable character in the parable to a native of this country. Or if the manner in which the evangelist has introduced this transaction, does not imply that it happened immediately after the seventy had given an account of their mission, we may suppose that Jesus had left Samaria, and was gone into Judea. If so, it is not improbable that when he spake the parable he might be nigh to the place where the scene of it is laid. Travellers tell us, that the road from Jerusalem to Jericho ran through a mountainous country, fit for sheltering robbers, and that it was actually infested much with that sort of people, See Maundrel's Travels. The scene of the parable therefore is very properly laid.

§ LXXXIII. *Jesus lodges at Bethany with Martha and Mary, in his way to the feast of dedication. Luke x. 38,—42.*

IN his way to Jerusalem, whither he was going to celebrate the feast of dedication, Jesus spent a night at Bethany, in the house of Martha and Mary, two religious women, the sisters of Lazarus. Luke x. 38. *Now it came to pass as they went (journeyed) he entered into a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. On this occasion Martha expressed her regard for her divine guest, by the care she was at in providing the best entertainment in her power for him and his disciples; but Mary, the other sister, sat quietly at his feet listening to his doctrine, for he embraced every opportunity of imparting the knowledge of divine things to such as were willing to receive it. The burden of the service therefore lying upon Martha, and she being cumbered with it, blamed Jesus for allowing her sister to sit idly by him, while she was so much hurried. 39. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet and heard his words. 40. But Martha was cumbered with much serving, and came unto him and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. In return, Jesus gently reproved Martha for putting herself to so much trouble about him, and commended Mary for applying herself to hear his doctrine. 41. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful*

*sub*



*ful and troubled about many things : 42. But one thing is needful.* *Μεμνημένος καὶ τρυβάζῃ περὶ πολλὰ. εὐας δὲ ἓς χρεῖα.* This some translate, *Tbou art careful and troubled about many dishes ; but there is need of one only. And Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her \** : Mary, who now employs herself in hearing my doctrine, rather than in providing an entertainment for me, hath chosen a part which I approve of, and which I will not take from her.

\* The praise bestowed on Mary as having chosen a better part than Martha, does not imply that the contemplative life is more acceptable in the sight of God than the active, as the Papists would have us believe ; for though it should be granted, that the comparison is run between the employments of Martha and Mary as they stand in the sight of God, the conclusion will not follow which they pretend to draw from it. The reason is plain : it is not two courses of life, but two particular actions that are here compared ; in which case no body will deny, that to hear the word of God as occasion offers, provided we do it with a view to profit by it, is more acceptable in the sight of God than to exercise any art or occupation relative to the present life ; for no other reason, however, but that it tends more to the happiness of the person himself, which is the great end that God has proposed in all his laws. In the mean time it may be doubted, whether this be the meaning of the comparison. Our Lord designed rather to signify, that though he was not displeased with Martha's civility, Mary's listening to his doctrine was more acceptable to him, because he had infinitely greater pleasure in instructing, sanctifying, and saving souls, than in any kind of sensual indulgences whatsoever. As he beautifully expressed it on another occasion, " His meat and his drink was to do the will of his heavenly Father,"

§ LXXXIV. *At the feast of dedication, Jesus meets with the man who was born blind, whom he had cured at the preceding feast of tabernacles. See § 78. He leaves Jerusalem and goes to Perea. His ministry in Perea begins. See § 98. John ix. 35,—41. X. I,—42.*

ABOUT the time that the feast of dedication began, Jesus arrived at Jerusalem ; and being told that the council had excommunicated the beggar, on whom he had conferred the faculty of sight at the preceding feast of tabernacles, he resolved to make him full amends for the injury he had suffered on his account. Accordingly having found him, he discovered himself to him as the Messiah, and invited him to believe on him. John ix. 35. *Jesus heard that they had cast him out ; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God ? 36. He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him ? 37. And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee.* The beggar being fully convinced of his mission from God, by the great miracle performed on himself, (see ver. 30,—33. § 78.) replied, 38. *Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.* Upon this, Jesus directed his discourse to the people, who happened to be present with them : 39. *And Jesus*



*Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind.* In these words he alluded to the cure of the blind man; but his meaning was spiritual, representing not the design of his coming, but the effect which it would have upon the minds of men. It would shew what character and disposition every man was of. The humble, and teachable, and honest, though they were as much in the dark, with respect to religion and the knowledge of scriptures, as the blind man had been with respect to the light of the sun, should be greatly enlightened by his coming; whereas, those who in their own opinion were wise, and learned, and clear-sighted, should appear to be what they really were, *blind*, that is, quite ignorant and foolish. The Pharisees present hearing him speak thus, imagined that he cast a reflection on their sect, which was held in great veneration among the common people because of their skill in the law. Wherefore, they replied with disdain, Do you imagine that we are blind like the rude vulgar; we, who are their teachers, and have taken such pains to acquire the knowledge of the scriptures? (see Acts xxii. 3.) John ix. 40. *And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also?* Jesus told them, that they would not have been to blame for rejecting him, if they had not had faculties and opportunities to discern the proofs of his mission; in that respect they were not blind. Nay, he acknowledged that they were superior to the vulgar in point of learning. But at the same time he assured them, that because their hearts were averse from receiving and acknowledging the truth, they were altogether blind; and that an enlightened understanding greatly aggravates the guilt of a blind heart. 41, *Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin; but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.*

Having thus reproved the Pharisees for shutting their eyes against the evidence of his mission, he continued the reproof by describing the characters of a true and false teacher, leaving them who had so unjustly excommunicated the beggar, to judge which of the classes they belonged to. Our Lord being now in the outer court of the temple, near the sheep which were there exposed to sale for sacrifice, the language of the ancient prophets came into his mind, who often compared the teachers of their own times to shepherds, and the people to sheep. Accordingly, in describing the characters of the Scribes and Pharisees, he made use of the same metaphor, shewing that there are two kinds of evil shepherds, pastors, or teachers; one, who instead of entering in by the door to lead the flock out and feed it, enter in some other way with an intention to steal, kill and destroy; there is another kind of evil shepherds, who, though they may have entered in by the door, feed their flocks with the dispositions of hirelings; for



for when they see the wolf coming, or any danger approaching, they desert their flocks, because they love themselves only. Of the former character the Pharisees plainly shewed themselves to be, by excommunicating the man that had been blind, because he would not act contrary to the dictates of his reason and conscience to please them. But though they cast him out of their church, Christ received him into his, which is the true church, the spiritual inclosure, where the sheep go in and out, and find pasture. That this parabolical discourse was taken from the sheep which were inclosed in little folds within the outer court of the temple, whither they were brought by their own shepherds to be sold, is plain, because our Lord speaks of such folds as the shepherd himself could not enter, till the porter opened to him the door, viz. of the temple. John x. 1. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber*: I assure you that whosoever in any age of the church, assumed the office of a teacher without commission from me, and without a sincere regard to the edification and salvation of men's souls, was a thief and a robber; and in the present age, he is no better who assumes that office without my commission, and particularly without believing on me, and without intending my honour, and the good of my church. For as our Lord calls himself *the door*, ver. 9. entering by the door must signify acting by his commission, which at that time could not be done without believing on him, and regarding his interest. He therefore here condemns the Scribes and Pharisees, who by assuming to themselves the right of teaching the people, had, directly contrary to God's command, intruded into the province of the priests, who were by God himself appointed the public teachers, (Levit. x. 11.) whose lips were to preserve knowledge, and at whose mouth the people were to seek the law, Mal. ii. 7. This is the reason that our Lord called the Scribes and Pharisees "a plantation which his heavenly Father had not planted," Matth. xv. 13. and ordered his disciples "to beware of their doctrine," Matt. xvi. 12. because "they taught for doctrines the commandments of men, and made void the commandments of God by their traditions," Matt. xv. 6. 9. John x. 2. *But he that entereth in by the door, the teacher that believes on me, and acts by commission from me, is the shepherd of the sheep*. 3. *To him the porter openeth*; the person or persons who have a right to admit pastors, open the door to him:—*and the sheep bear his voice*; the people of God knowing him to be a true pastor, hearken unto him:—*and he \* calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth*

\* Ver. 3. *Calleth his own sheep by name.*] This is in allusion to the customs of Judea, where shepherds had names for their sheep, who answered



*leadeth them out.* 4. *And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him; for they know his voice.* The moral meaning of this circumstance is, that good men are obedient to the instructions of true and faithful teachers; and that the latter shew them their duty in every case with great plainness, not concealing it because it may be disagreeable to their inclinations. 5. *And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers.* As sheep will not follow a strange shepherd, so the people of God will not hearken to impostors and false teachers, but will avoid them; for they can easily distinguish them from the messengers of God by their fruits, that is, by their doctrine and life. 6. *This parable spake Jesus unto them; but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them:* He taught the Pharisees the difference between true and false teachers, by the foregoing parable, but they did not understand the meaning of it:—wherefore he added, by way of explication, 7. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.* Perhaps this is a metonymy for, *I am the door of the sheepfold.* Or his meaning may have been, I am not only the door by which the shepherds must enter, he whose right alone it is to admit men to the office and dignity of shepherds, but I am also the door of the sheep; it is by me that men enter into the spiritual inclosure of the church. 8. \* *All that ever came before me, all those who in former times assumed*

to them, as dogs and horses do with us, following to the pasture ground, and wherever their shepherds thought fit to lead them. The moral meaning of the circumstances mentioned above, namely, that the shepherd calls his own sheep by name, and leads them out to pasture, is, that every faithful minister of Christ attends upon the duties of his ministry, making them his principal business; that he spends his time among his people; that he knows their characters and tempers; and that he suits his instructions to every one's case, as his need requires.

\* Ver. 8. *All that ever came before me, &c.*] Here, as in many other instances, our Lord's words are very elliptical, and must be filled up from what goes before. The addition which I have ventured to supply, is taken from ver. 1. and seems altogether necessary; because it does not clearly appear from history, that any one among the Jews assumed the title of Messiah before our Lord came. Judas and Theudas of Galilee, indeed, are mentioned by Gamaliel. as having given themselves out for persons of note, Acts v. 36. 37. But with respect to Judas, it is evident from Josephus, that he did not assume the title of the Messiah; he only gave rise to a political faction, whose distinction was, that they would pay no taxes to the Romans, nor any foreign power. And as for Theudas, though Josephus has mentioned an impostor of that name, he cannot be the person Gamaliel speaks of, because he arose under the procuratorship of Cuspius Fadus, several years after Gamaliel reasoned in the council. Besides, from the character which the Jewish doctor has given of Theudas, it does not appear that he called himself the Messiah. Like Judas of Galilee, he only pretended to be some extraordinary person, who had eminent skill in the law. and taught opinions contrary to those that were commonly received. Perhaps he called himself a prophet, to give his doctrines



assumed the character of teachers of religion, without commission from me, *are thieves and robbers*; but the sheep did not bear them. John x. 9. *I am the door*, I alone am he, whose right it is to admit men into the church of God; *by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture*: If any man believeth on me, he shall become a true member of God's church on earth, and shall from time to time receive such instructions as shall nourish his soul unto eternal life. The image is changed here, for now our Lord seems to have had a park in his eye where cattle are fed, and not the outer court of the temple, as in the former branch of his discourse. 10. *The thief cometh not but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy*; I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly: I am no thief or robber as you may easily know, by considering that the intention of such is only to steal, and kill, and destroy the flock; they assume the character of teachers divinely commissioned, for no other reason but to promote their own interest at the expence of mens souls. Whereas, I am come not merely to give you life, but to give it more abundantly than it is given by Moses in the dispensation of the law. 11. *I am the good shepherd*; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. 12. *But he that is an hireling and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep*. 13. *The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep*. I am not an hireling shepherd appointed by the owner to take care of the flock; but I am the good shepherd promised

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doctrines the greater weight, and pretended to work miracles. If the sense of the passage given in the paraphrase is not admitted, we may suppose that by *them who came before him*, our Lord meant the Scribes and Pharisees, his contemporaries, who oftentimes came to try him, and when he was in Jerusalem at the festivals, watched him, and tempted him with ensnaring questions, hoping to expose him as an impostor. These trials Jesus very properly expressed by the figure of *coming before him*, in allusion to his having called himself, in the preceding verse, *the door of the sheep*, ἡ θύρα τῆς προβάτων, the door through which the sheep entered into the fold, as is plain from ver. 1. *All the shepherds that ever came before me*, to examine and prove me, *are thieves and robbers*. The reason why he gave them this character, he had explained in the first verse; though they heard his doctrine, and saw his miracles, they would not allow themselves to be convinced; or if they were convinced, they would not yield to their conviction; would not acknowledge him as the Messiah, and receive their commission to teach mankind from him, but opposed him, and refused to enter by him, *the door*, into the sheep-court, the visible church. Being therefore evil shepherds, the people would not follow them; many believing on Jesus in spite of all that the Scribes and Pharisees could do to prevent it. Nor is the construction of the words in the original, unfavourable to this interpretation; for the preposition *πρὸ* is applied to place as well as time; thus, Acts v. 13. *πρὸ θυρώ*, and Luke vii. 27. *πρὸ πρῶτον* πρὸ Job iv. 16. *πρὸ οφθαλμῶν μου*.



promised Isa. xl. 11. Ezek. xxxiv. 23. and the proprietor of the sheep, as is evident from this, that I cheerfully endanger my life for the safety of the flock; whereas an hireling, proposing nothing but his own gain, when he sees the wolf coming, deserts the sheep; because, instead of loving them, he loves himself, and will not expose himself to any danger on their account; so that the beast of prey, without resistance, tears some of the flock to pieces, and disperses the rest. From this, it plainly appears to be the duty of every minister of the gospel to reside in ordinary with his flock. For if approaching danger is no excuse for his fleeing away and leaving them, far less will interest or pleasure, or any lesser matter, be an excuse for such unfaithfulness. John x. 14. *I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.* Being the good shepherd and the owner of the sheep, I am so earnest in tending my flock, that I not only know every particular sheep, so as to be able to claim it, in whose possession soever it happens to be, but I know every thing relating to my sheep. I know the circumstances wherein they are placed, am well acquainted with their wants, and can judge what aids they stand in need of. Besides, I love them all with an ardent affection, and approve of their obedience to me, because, though it be imperfect, it is sincere. And as I know, love and approve my sheep, so I am known and beloved of them in return. For they have just apprehensions of my dignity and character; in particular, they know that I am their shepherd and saviour sent from God, and that I am able to feed them with knowledge, and to deliver them from the punishment of sin, and to bestow on them everlasting life. And this our mutual knowledge and love of each other, is like that which subsists between the Father and me. 15. *As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father.* This sentence ought to be construed with the foregoing verse thus: *I know my sheep, and am known of mine, (καὶ οἱ πατέρες καὶ ἐγὼ γινώσκω τοὺς πατέρας), even as the Father knoweth me and I know the Father.* And I lay down my life for the sheep: I will shew the greatness of the love which I bear to my sheep by dying for them, which no hireling ever will do. And to convince you that I know my sheep, and am known of them, I tell you that I have other sheep besides the Jews; I have sheep among the Gentiles, for I know them in every country whose honesty of disposition will make them capable of obeying the gospel. These I will bring into my church, and they shall know me, and shall distinguish my voice from that of a stranger, and shall cheerfully submit to my laws. 16. *And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also must I bring, and they shall bear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd:* When the Gentiles are converted, there shall be but one visible church, consisting of them and the Jews, as there is but one shep-  
herd



herd to feed and govern them ; there shall be no more any middle wall of partition. And as for the love which my Father bears to me, it is founded on this among other reasons, that I lay down my life to save the world. However, I lay it down so as to take it up again, for I will rise from the dead in due time, never to die more. 17. *Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that (namely, so as) I might take it again.* 18. *No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself :* It is impossible to take my life from me by force, I lay it down of my own accord. *I have power to lay it down ; a right to dispose of it, and I have power to take it again :* I am able to raise myself from the dead ; nay, I can do it as easily as I can die. Nevertheless, I do not lay down my life, nor rise again from the dead, without the appointment of my Father ; in both I act wisely, and agreeable to the divine will : *this commandment I received of my Father.*

These sayings affected the minds of the Jews differently, for some of them cried out that he was possessed and mad, and that it was folly to hear him ; others, judging more impartially of him and his doctrine, declared that his discourses were not the words of a lunatic, nor his miracles the works of a devil. Moreover, they asked his enemies, if they imagined any devil was able to impart the faculty of sight to one that was born blind, alluding to the astonishing cure which Jesus had lately performed. John x. 19. *There was a division therefore among the Jews for these sayings.* 20. *And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad ; why hear ye him ?* 21. *Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil : Can a devil open the eyes of the blind ?*

John x. 22. *And it was at Jerusalem \* the feast of the dedication,*

\* Ver. 22. *The feast of the dedication, and it was winter.]* As this feast was in winter, it could not be observed in commemoration of the dedication of the temple by Solomon, which happened in the month-Ethanim, answering to our September, 1 Kings viii. 2. Nor could it be the dedication of the temple by Nehemiah, which was in the spring, Ezra vi. 15. But it was that which was kept in honour of the purification of the temple by Judas Maccabeus, who took away the idols and altars set up in it by Antiochus Epiphanes, and abolished the idolatrous worship established by that prince, banishing the priests and consecrating a new altar. This restoration of the worship of God was a very joyful event to every religious Israelite ; and being considered as a new dedication of the temple, great regard was paid to the festival instituted in remembrance of it ; see Joseph. Antiq. xii. 11. Accordingly, though it was of human institution, our Lord did not scruple to be present at it. They celebrated the feast of dedication for eight days successively, beginning on the twenty-fifth of the month Calueu, 1 Mac. iv. 56. 59. 2 Mac. x. 5. 8. But the latter half of that month falling in with the first half of our December, it was winter, and commonly bad weather at this feast (see Jewish Antiq. Disc. vii. 11.) ; wherefore, to avoid the inclemencies of the season, Jesus walked in Solo-  
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tion, (*τα συναμα*) and it was winter. 23. And Jesus walked in the temple, in Solomon's porch. Here the Jews came and required him to put them out of doubt, by telling them plainly whether or no he was Messiah. Jesus knowing that it was not information they were seeking, but an opportunity of accusing him to the Romans as a seditious person who aspired to be a king, directed them as before to form a judgment of him from his actions. 24. Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ tell us plainly. 25. Jesus answered them, I told you, namely, by my whole conduct, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. 26. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you: The reason why ye disbelieve me, is not because the proofs of my mission are insufficient, but because ye are not of a humble teachable disposition, free from worldly passions, and willing to receive the doctrine that comes from God. Persons of this character easily know, by the nature of my doctrine and miracles, who I am; consequently are soon disposed to follow me. And I on my part readily acknowledge and receive them, and bestow eternal life upon them. 27. My sheep bear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. 28. And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand: Though you maliciously endeavour to hinder men from believing on me, neither you, nor the powers of darkness by whom you are actuated, shall be able to do it. For—29. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all; and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. 30. I and my Father are one. The Arians affirm, that the sense of this passage is, My Father and I are the same in power and in will; so that if you oppose my will you oppose his, and if you take my sheep out of my hand, you must at the same time overcome him, and take them out of his hand likewise. But the orthodox believe, that the words denote unity of essence; and to support their opinion, they observe that the Jews (ver. 33.) took them in this sense, from which they infer, that it must be the most natural and obvious meaning of them. The truth is, his hearers were provoked by them to such a degree, that they took up stones and were going to kill him outright, imagining that he had spoken blasphemy. John x. 31. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him, in obedience, as they supposed, to the law, Lev. xxiv. 14. 32. Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? In confirmation of my mission from my Father I have worked many miracles, all of a beneficent kind, and most becoming the perfections of my Father who

Solomon's Portico, which was a stately fabric, enclosing part of the court of the Gentiles. See the note, § 122.



who sent me; I have fed the hungry, I have healed the lame, I have cured the sick, I have given sight to the blind, I have cast out devils, and I have raised the dead; for which of all these are ye going to stone me? 33. *The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy, and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.* We are going to punish thee with death for no good work, but for blasphemy; for though thou art a man, weak and mortal as we ourselves are, thou arrogantly assumest to thyself the power and majesty of God; and by laying claim to the incommunicable attributes of the Deity, makest thyself God. This they took to be the plain meaning of his assertion, that he and the Father were one. 34. *Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, (Psal. lxxxii. 6.) \* I said, Ye are gods? 35. If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken: 36. Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said I am the Son of God? If in the scripture, the authority of which you all acknowledge, they to whom the commandment of ruling God's people was given, are called gods, and the sons of God, on account of their high office, and the inspiration of the Spirit which was bestowed on them but sparingly; can ye with reason say of him, whom God hath sent into the world on the grand work of saving the human race, and whom he hath set apart for that work by giving him the Spirit without measure, (John iii. 34.) Thou blasphemest, because he said, I am the Son of God†? 37. If I do*  
not

\* Ver. 34. *I said, Ye are gods?*] The Jewish magistrates were God's deputies in an especial manner, because the people whom they governed were his peculiar people, and because in many instances they were expressly called by him to undertake the fatigues of government, and had an afflatus or inspiration of the Spirit for that end. Thus the high priests derived their dignity from God, and were possessed of the Urim and Thummim, by which they inquired of the Lord. And for any of the people to rebel against the sentence of the high priest, or judge, pronounced by Urim, was justly reckoned rebellion against God, and punished with death, Deut. xvii. 8,—13. When Moses chose the seventy elders to assist him in the distribution of justice, God put his Spirit upon them, and they prophesied, Numb. xi. 17. 25. Joshua, who succeeded Moses by divine appointment, is said to have been a man in whom the Spirit was, Numb xxvii. 18. Many of the judges were raised up by God and had his Spirit. When Saul was anointed king, the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied, 1 Sam. x. 6. 10.

† Some give the argument another turn: thus, If they to whom the word of God, or the revelation of his will, came, are called gods in scripture, how dare you say to the Word of God himself, whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, i. e. by whom all the various revelations of the divine will have been made to men, how dare you say to such a person on such an occasion, *Thou blasphemest?* Knatchbull, Le Clerc, and others contend, that the translation of the words *αὐτοὺς καλεῖ θεοὺς πρὸς ᾧ ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ ὡς οὐκ*, should be, *if he called them gods against whom the Word of God was pronounced.*



*not the works of my Father, believe me not.* 38. *But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works :* Though ye do not believe what I say concerning my personal dignity, on my own authority, ye ought to believe it on account of my miracles, which are plainly of such a kind; that it is impossible for any deceiver to perform them; they are the works of God himself, and therefore ye ought to consider them as such; *believe the works, that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him :* may know that I neither do nor say any thing but by his authority; for the Father and I are so united, that every thing I say and do, is in reality said and done by him, and he approves of it accordingly. See ver. 30.

This defence was so far from pacifying the Jews, that they were rather the more enraged. John x. 39. *Therefore they sought again to take him ; but he escaped out of their hand,* 40. \* *And went away again beyond Jordan, into the place where John at first baptised ;* to Bethabara, John i. 28. see the end of the note on Luke iii. 3. § 14. *and there he abode* (μενεν αυ). He remained in the country of Perea, till he came into Judea, to raise Lazarus from the dead; that being the next particular mentioned by the evangelist John. If so, the time of Christ's abode in the country beyond Jordan, must have been considerable. There is a peculiar beauty in this hypothesis; for allowing it to be just, the people dwelling on the other side of Jordan, will have enjoyed the doctrine and miracles of the Son of God, as well as the inhabitants of Judea, Samaria, the Galilees, the countries on the east side of the lake, and those lying far north about Tyre and Sidon, and Cæsarea Philippi; whereas, according to the common opinion,

pronounced. They imagine their conjecture is favoured by the passage in the Old Testament, which our Lord had now in his eye, and which runs thus, Psal. lxxxii. 6. "I have said, Ye are gods, and all of you are children of the Most High, but ye shall die like men." And it must be owned, that the reasoning in this light likewise is conclusive. If the scripture, which cannot err, gives the title of *gods* to mortal men, why should you reckon me guilty of blasphemy whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world on so grand a design, because I take the title of the Son of God?

\* Ver. 40. *And went away beyond Jordan.*] *πέραν τοῦ Ιορδάνου*, into Perea. Josephus, Bell. iii. 2. gives the following description of this country. "Perea, though much greater than Galilee, is for the most part desert and rocky, so is unfit for producing corn. Its soft land indeed is very fruitful, and the plains are planted with various sorts of trees. For the most part, however, it is used in producing olives, and vines, and palm-trees, being watered with torrents from the mountains, and perennial springs when the other happen to fail through the dog days heat. Now the length of this country is from Mahærus to Pella; its breadth from Philadelphia to Jordan. Moreover, the aforesaid Pella bounds it on the north, and Jordan towards the west; its southern boundary is the country of Moab; and towards the east, Arabia and Simonitis (Silbonitis) ending at the region of Philadelphia and Gerar (Gerasis)."



opinion, Jesus did not exercise his ministry in Perea for any length of time at all. The evangelist tells us, that Christ's ministry in Perea was attended with great success; for the people there remembering the character which John Baptist had given of him, were sensible that it was verified by his doctrine and miracles, for which reason they firmly believed him to be the Messiah. *41. And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle, but all things that John spake of this man were true. 42. And many believed on him there.* Our Lord's public life was now drawing towards a close, yet he had a great deal still to do; this was the reason that he did not conceal himself, as in the beginning of his ministry, but preached constantly in the places of greatest resort, and confirmed his doctrine by many miracles, which he suffered to be published every where. Accordingly, the success of his ministry in the country beyond Jordan was answerable to the power wherewith it was accompanied. *Many believed on him there.*

§ LXXXV. *In Perea, Jesus teaches his disciples to pray. The parable of the importunate friend. Luke xi. 1,—13.*

WHILE Jesus was in the country beyond Jordan, he happened to pray publicly with such fervency, that one of his disciples, exceedingly affected both with the matter and manner of his address, begged that he would teach them to pray. Luke xi. 1. *And it came to pass, that as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray as John also taught his disciples.* It seems this disciple had not been present when our Lord, in the beginning of his ministry, gave his hearers directions concerning their devotions; or if he was present, he had forgotten what had then been said. Wherefore Jesus, who always rejoiced to find his hearers desirous of instruction, willingly embraced this opportunity, and repeated the discourse on prayer, which he had formerly delivered in his sermon on the mount, but with this difference, that he now handled the arguments which he had offered as motives to the duty, a little more fully than before. *2. And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth. 3. Give us day by day our daily bread. 4. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.* See on Matt. vi 9. § 26.

Having by this short form taught his disciples that they were not in prayer to use a multiplicity of words, with vain repetitions, he proceeded to caution them on the other hand against coldness, indifferency and slackness in their supplications. The evil of this, and the necessity of asking affectionately, with im-  
portunity



portunity and perseverance, he taught them by a parable, in which he shewed them, that *importunity*, i. e. earnestness and frequency in asking, are the proper natural expressions of strong desires, and by consequence, that God very properly requires these things in men, before he bestows on them such favours as they stand in need of, just as he requires them to be earnestly desirous of these favours before he blesses them therewith. Luke xi. 5. *And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, the most unseasonable time imaginable for asking a favour, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves : do me this favour on account of our mutual friendship ;* 6. *For a friend of mine, one to whom I am particularly indebted, in his journey is come to me : having travelled so late and long, my friend is both weary and hungry, and I have nothing to set before him, a case of all others the most urgent.* 7. *And he from within, being of a churlish disposition, shall answer and say, Trouble me not, what you ask will put me to a great deal of trouble, the door is now shut, and must have its locks and bolts opened, and my children are with me in bed :* τα παῖδια μου μετ' ἐμῆς ἐσσι τῆς πόρτης κλεισθῆς, *my servants, together with me, are in bed ;* so παῖδια signifies, 1 Sam. xxi. 5. My servants are in bed as well as myself, and very probably they are fast asleep, so that there is no body at hand to give you what you want. *I cannot rise and give thee :* You cannot expect that I will rise and give you loaves. 8. *I say unto you, though he will not rise and give him because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth :* This man, though he be of so surly a disposition as not to yield to the calls and influence of friendship, yet will he be prevailed upon by the force of importunity, because it shews both the greatness of the suppliant's distress, and the earnestness of his desire. 9. *And I say unto you, ask and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you :* Pray frequently, and be most earnest and importunate in your prayers, because thus you shall obtain whatsoever you ask agreeable to the will of God ; see on Luke xviii. 1. § 101. 10. *For every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened ;* see on Matth. vii. 7. § 26. 11. *If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone in the shape of a loaf ? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent, which hath some resemblance of a fish ?* 12. *Or \* if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion ?* These different

\* Ver. 12. *If he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion ?* Naturalists tell us, that the body of a scorpion is very like an egg, especially if the scorpion is of the white kind, which is the first species mentioned by Ælian, Avicenna and others. Bochart has produced testimonies to prove that the scorpions



different instances are mentioned by Jesus, in order that the doctrine which he is here inculcating might make the stronger impression upon his hearers. 13. *If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?* See on Matt. vii. 11. § 26.

scorpions in Judea were about the bigness of an egg. And therefore in Judea, a white scorpion, being very like an egg, might to children, who were not capable of distinguishing the one from the other, be offered in place thereof, if the person so doing meant that it should sting them to death.

**§ LXXXVI.** *In Perea, our Lord cures a dumb demoniac. His miracles are ascribed to Beelzebub a third time; see § 36. 48. The Pharisees a third time demand the sign from heaven; see § 48. 68. The sign of the prophet Jonas is promised a third time; see § 48. 68. The parable of the lighted candle. Luke xi. 14,—36.*

ABOUT this time our Lord happened to cast out a devil; but some who were present ascribed the miracle to Beelzebub, others demanded a sign from heaven. Luke xi. 14. *And he was casting out a devil, and it was dumb.* A like miracle our Lord had performed some time ago in Capernaum. See on Matt. ix. 32. § 37. *And it came to pass when the devil was gone out, the dumb spake, and the people wondered.* See on Matt. xv. 30. § 67. 15. *But some of them said, \* He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the chief*

\* Ver. 15. *He casteth out devils through Beelzebub, the chief of the devils.]* The Pharisees affirmed that Jesus performed his miracles, particularly on possessed persons, by the assistance of Beelzebub, for two reasons: 1. Jesus had all along been at great pains to oppose those superstitions, which most of the teachers and people of that age looked upon as the essentials of religion, and extolled as the principal branches of piety. Hence, they took him who descried them to be a very flagitious person. And because it is supposed, Deut. xiii. 1,—3. that a false prophet might work signs and wonders with an intention to turn men from the worship of God, they thought our Lord was a deceiver of that kind, affirming that he performed all his miracles by the assistance of evil spirits, and with a view to seduce the people from their obedience to God. 2. The demons in addressing Jesus, honoured him with the title of the Messiah. This, it is probable, his enemies said, the devils never would have done, had he not been in compact with them. Hence, we see the reason why our Lord, on several occasions, strictly charged the devils not to make him known; he would not have their testimony, because it was a real defamation of him intended; and because he foresaw that it would be made a bad use of by men of evil minds.

The account which the Pharisees gave of Christ's miracles, and which they endeavoured to propagate, in order to prevent the effect which they might have had upon the people, though it was altogether false and malicious, and even absurd in the eye of impartial judges, yet placed in the light just now mentioned, had some shew of argument in it, at least



*chief of the devils.* Luke xi. 16. *And others tempting him, sought of him a sign from heaven:* By asking a miracle immediately after the demon was banished, they signified their contempt of dispossessions; for they thought devils might cast out devils, the stronger being always able to expel the weaker; and therefore the language of their demand was, that the ejection of devils never could prove any person to be the Messiah. 17. *But he knowing their thoughts said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house divided against a house,* that is, according to the Hebrew idiom, “against itself,” *falletb.* 18. *If*

to persons whose prejudices and interests were favoured by it. Accordingly, among other causes, it contributed not a little to the infidelity of the Jews; which, to any thinking person, cannot but be matter of great wonder, considering what multitudes were witnesses of the many miracles performed by Jesus on the sick of all sorts, on the blind, the deaf, the dumb, the maimed and the lame, on paralytics, lunatics, demoniacs, and other miserable objects, nay, and on dead persons whom he raised again to life; on the winds, and on the seas; in a word, on every part of nature.

The evangelists have mentioned only three instances of the calumny under consideration; but we may naturally suppose, that our Lord's enemies would propagate it every where, and on all occasions, to blast the credit of his miracles with the common people. The composers of Harmonies, therefore, must be much mistaken, who fancy that it was never mentioned but once, or at most twice; and who, to support their opinion, have confounded the miracle, Matt. xii. 22. on occasion of which it was formerly uttered, with this under our consideration. For though the answer which was now returned to the calumny of the Pharisees be the same with that given in Galilee, (see § 48.) it will not follow, that the miracles were the same in point of time and place. This answer was a valid confutation of the calumny in all places, and at all times, and the most proper that could be given to it, so would naturally be repeated as often as the calumny was thrown out. But that the answer was twice spoken, may reasonably be supposed, not only because the order and connection of the history makes such a supposition necessary, but because the arguments of which it is composed, though the same in both instances, are differently arranged in each. For here our Lord, after observing that a kingdom, or house, divided against itself cannot stand, ver. 17,—20. and delivering the parable of the strong man in armour, who guarded his own house, ver. 21,—23. as in the other answer, produced immediately the parable of the ejected demon, ver. 24,—26. with which the former defence was concluded. Thus far only he had proceeded, when a woman in the crowd, ravished with the justness and beauty of the things which he said, cried out, 27. *Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked.* Happy is she who gave birth to a man so wise and good as thou art. 28. *But he said, Yea, rather blessed are they that bear the word of God and keep it.* A sentiment very different from that which he uttered at the conclusion of the former defence, in answer to the person who told him, that his mother and his brethren desired to speak with him, *Whoever shall do the will of my Father, which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.* Then turning to the people in general, he spake to them concerning the queen of the South, and the men of Nineveh. But the chief circumstance which distinguishes this defence from the former, is the parable of the lighted candle with which it was concluded, and which is peculiar to it.



18. *If Satan also be divided against himself, if he wars against the evil spirits which are under his empire, and destroys their power over the souls and bodies of men, how shall his kingdom stand?* I say this to you, *because ye say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub.* Luke xi. 19. And besides this, *if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges.* If Jesus does not mean here the prophets, as we supposed in the explication of the parallel passage, Matt. xii. 27. § 48. he must have in his eye those vagabonds, who went about exorcising the devils by incantations and charms. On that supposition his argument will run in this manner: If those among yourselves, who cast out devils by charms and incantations, are reckoned by you to do it through God's assistance, because the immediate intention of the miracle is to deliver the possessed from misery; I, who cast out devils with the finger of God, I, who in this matter act as God, casting out the evil spirits merely by commanding them to be gone, should be considered by you as the Son of God come down to erect the kingdom of God among you. 20. *But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.* Others think, that by the sons of the Jews who cast out devils, our Lord meant those who even in his own life-time went about ejecting devils by his name, of which there is one example recorded Mark ix. 38. In this view, his argument will stand thus: How is your supposition, that I cast out devils by Beelzebub, consistent with what you behold? Some of your own disciples cast out devils by my name. Could they do so, if I myself cast them out by a derived power, a power from Beelzebub? 21. *When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace, they are safe.* 22. *But when a stronger than he shall come upon him and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils:* No strong man is ever disturbed in the possession of his estate, but by some stronger person, who comes upon him and subdues him. The moral meaning of this allusion is, that the Son of God by coming down to the world, the devil's house, and by taking away from him the armour wherein he trusted, the power of deceiving mankind by false miracles and other delusions, hath demonstrated himself to be a much stronger person than the devil: He is the conqueror of the devil, and the deliverer of the world. 23. *He that is not with me, is against me, and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth.* See on Matth. xii. 30. § 48. 24. *When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places (deserts) seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out.* 25. *And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished, better prepared than ever for his reception.* 26. *Then goeth he and taketh to him seven other spi-*  
rits



*its more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there ; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. See on Matt. xii. 43, 44, 45. § 48.*

While Jesus thus reasoned in confutation of the Pharisees, a woman of the company, ravished with his wisdom and eloquence, and perhaps believing him to be their long expected Messiah, expressed her admiration of his character in a manner suitable to her sex. She brake forth in an exclamation upon the happiness of the woman who had the honour of giving him birth. Luke xi. 27. *And it came to pass as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lift up her voice and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked. But Jesus not at all moved with her praise, gave her an answer, which at the same time that it shewed his humility, did the greatest honour to virtue. The blessedness, said he, which you prize so much, and which could be enjoyed by one woman only, however great, is far inferior to a blessedness which is in every one's power, namely, that which arises from the knowledge and practice of the will of God. 28. But he said, Yea, rather blessed are they that bear the word of God and keep it.*

On this occasion, the multitude gathered round in a great crowd, and pressed upon him, in expectation that he was going to shew them the sign from heaven, which some of them had required from him. But he repulsed them, by telling them, that they were an evil race of men, who discovered a very perverse disposition in seeking signs, after so many miracles had been wrought by him ; for which reason no greater sign should be given them, than those they were daily beholding, except the sign of the prophet Jonas. Luke xi. 29. *And when the people were gathered thick together, he began to say, This is an evil generation ; they seek a sign, and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet. 30. For as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation : You shall have the miracle performed before you, which was prefigured by Jonah's preservation in the belly of the whale. See on Matt. xii. 40. § 48. 31. The queen of the South shall rise up (ὡς δαίμων) in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them ; for she came from the utmost part of the earth to bear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold a greater than Solomon is here. 32. The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with (μετα, along with) this generation, and shall condemn it ; for they repented at the preaching of Jonas, and behold a greater than Jonas is here. See on Matt. xii. 41, 42. § 48.*

Withal, to make these men sensible of the great evil they were guilty of, in overlooking the evidences which he had already given of his mission, and in resisting the dictates of their own consciences, he spake a parable to them, in which he shewed them



them the end for which God had given them the faculty of reason, and pointed out to them in what manner they ought to use it. Luke xi. 33. *No man when he hath lighted a candle, putteth it into a secret place, neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light : As he who lights a lamp, does not put it under a bushel, but on a stand, that it may give light to all in the house ; so God who has lighted up the faculty of reason in the human mind, that it may illuminate and direct all the faculties, does not mean, that men should suffer it to lie hid and useless ; much less does he mean that they should extinguish it. He wills them to keep this light always burning, to attend to it carefully, and to guide all their actions by it. The Pharisees, therefore, and their adherents, were greatly to blame in not following the light of reason ; and much more in suffering their passions to extinguish that candle of the Lord. And that they might understand his parable, and be excited to make a proper improvement of the noble faculty whose use he had been describing, he put them in mind that reason performs for the soul of man the office which the eye does for his body. 34. *The light of the body is the eye ; therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body is full of light : but when thine eye is evil, thy whole body also is full of darkness.* See on the sermon on the mount, Matt. vi. 22. § 26. 35. *Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness : Keep thy reason as free as possible from the influence of prejudice, pride, revenge, lust, covetousness, and other evil passions, for they will hatch swarms of vain and foolish thoughts, by which thy reason will be perverted, and the light that is in thee be turned into darkness.* 36. *If thy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light :* If thy mind is so completely enlightened by reason, that no evil passion or affection interrupts the emanations of its light in any degree, the whole faculties of thy soul shall be as much enlightened, enlivened, and assisted, as the members of thy body are, when the bright shining of a candle gives thee light, and puts thee in a capacity of using them. Wherefore; thus comparing the direction of reason to the shining of a candle, he shewed that by the parable of the lighted candle, he had intended to explain wherein the proper use of one's reason consists.*

§ LXXXVII. *Jesus dines with Pharisees a second time. See § 43. 92. He denounces heavy woes against the Scribes and Pharisees. See § 121. Luke xi. 37,—54.*

IN this manner did our blessed Lord prove the truth of his mission against the malicious cavils of his enemies. When he had made an end of speaking, one of the Pharisees present invited him



him to dinner. It is not told, whether he gave him the invitation as a mark of his respect for him, or with an insidious design. The severity with which Jesus reprov'd the superstition of the Pharisees while he sat at meat with them, and the malice which they discovered in urging him to say things offensive to the magistrate or to the people, make it probable that the latter rather was the case. Nevertheless, he accepted the invitation, and went along with the Pharisee, and sat down at table, but without washing, as all the other guests had done. When the Pharisee who invited him observed this, he expressed great surprise at his shewing such an open contempt of their traditions. Luke xi. 37. *And as he spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him; and he went in and sat down to meat.* 38. *And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that he had not first washed before dinner.* 39. *And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness: Ye are at great pains to keep every thing clean that touches your food, lest your body should be defiled in eating; but ye are at no pains to keep your mind clean from pollutions that are incomparably worse, the pollutions of rapine, and covetousness, and wickedness.* 40. *Ye fools, did not he that made that which is without, make that which is within also? Did not he who made the body, make the soul also? Wherefore, ye are grossly stupid and foolish, not to see that if God requires purity of body, because it is his workmanship, he will much more insist on purity of mind, which is the nobler part of human nature. And, therefore, instead of that scrupulousness with respect to meats and washings, which engrosses so much of your attention, you ought to apply yourselves to the duties of charity, and then it will not be in the power of any external thing to defile you, but ye shall at all times be acceptable to God.* 41. \* *But rather give alms of such things as you have, and behold all things are clean unto you:* We are not to imagine that alms-giving was particularly mentioned by Christ in his exhortation to the Pharisees, because it is of greater value and necessity than the other virtues. He recommended it to that sect,

\* Ver. 41. *But rather give alms, &c.*] πλην τα νοτια δετι ελεημοσυνην supple κατα τα νοτια, give as much alms as you can: so we find the phrase used by Epictetus, who advises his disciples to abstain from oaths. *αε των νοτιων*, as much as they could. Raphelius indeed affirms, that τα νοτια is a different phrase from *αε των νοτιων*. He thinks it refers to the meat in their cups and platters, because, Matth. xxiii. 26. we have *τα ποτηρια του ποτηριου και παροψιδος*. According to this interpretation, our Lord told the Pharisees, that they needed not be at a great deal of pains about the ceremonial cleanness of the dishes in which their meat was served up, provided they made the meat and drink itself clean, by giving liberally of it to the poor.



sect, because they were generally remarkable for their covetousness and extortion, (see ver. 39.) vices which must be repented of, by making restitution to those who have been injured by them. And when these cannot be known or found, the compensation must be made to the poor, as having the next right ; because what is given to them, is lent to God.

The Pharisees were of an incorrigibly stubborn disposition, which no instruction, however mild or persuasive, could sway : Wherefore, our Lord on this occasion wisely treated them with a kind and wholesome severity, denouncing most dreadful woes against them, for being so zealous in the ceremonial institutions of religion, while they utterly neglected the precepts of morality. Luke xi. 42. *But woe unto you, Pharisees, for ye tithe mint, and rue, and all manner of herbs, ye pay tythes of these things, and pass over judgment and the love of God. Ye shew such care and exactness in performing ceremonial precepts, that ye do not neglect even the least of them ; but the great duties of morality, the duties of justice, and truth, and charity towards men, and of love to God, which are of absolute and eternal obligation, ye utterly neglect as things of no importance in comparison. Nevertheless, these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone : The duties of morality ought to have been the principal object of your care, while at the same time the other should not have been left undone. Next, he denounced the judgment of God against them for their pride, which was so excessive, that it appeared in their carriage in the streets, and at all public meetings. 43. Woe unto you, Pharisees, for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets. In the third woe he joined the Scribes with the Pharisees, and condemned the hypocrisy of both. 44. Woe unto you, \* Scribes and Pharisees,*

\* Ver. 44. *Scribes.*] The Scribes were called in the Hebrew language, sopherim, *writers*, and are often mentioned in the sacred history, as persons of great authority in the Jewish commonwealth. They were originally secretaries, being employed in the church, the state, the army, the revenue, &c. to which offices those were intitled who could write, because anciently that art was practised by few. When Ezra made the reformation in religion, which has rendered him so famous among the Jewish doctors, he was assisted by the Scribes in revising the canon of scripture, and ordered matters so, that from thenceforth a sufficient number of them should always be employed in multiplying the copies of it. This class of men therefore being much conversant in the sacred writings, acquired a singular knowledge of them, and in process of time expounded them to the common people (Matt. vii. 39.) with such reputation, that at length they obtained the title of doctors, or teachers, (Luke ii. 46.) and were consulted upon all difficult points of faith, Matt. ii. 4. Hence they are said by our Lord to sit in Moses' chair, (Matt. xxiii. 3.) and to determine what doctrines are contained in scripture, Mark xii. 35. Hence also an able minister of the New Testament is called *a Scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven*. But as the Jews were divided into several religious sects,



sects, it is natural to imagine, that each sect gave such interpretations of scripture, as best agreed with their peculiar tenets. Wherefore, it cannot be doubted that the doctors studied and expounded the sacred writings, with a view to authorize the opinions of the party they espoused. Accordingly, (Acts xxiii. 9.) mention is made of the *Scribes that were of the sect of the Pharisees*. *Οι γραμματεῖς τοῦ μὲν τῶν Φαρισαίων*, which plainly implies, that some of the Scribes were of the other sects. It is true, the Scribes are distinguished from the Pharisees in the woes which our Lord now pronounced, and in several other passages, particularly Matt. v. 20. xxiii. 2. But from the latter of these passages, I think it is evident, that by the Scribes and Pharisees, is commonly meant the *Pharisaic Scribes*, according to the idiom of the Hebrew language. For as the name *Pharisees* denoted a sect, and not an office, it could by no means be said of the whole sect, that they sat in Moses' chair. A character of this sort, was applicable only to the doctors or Scribes of the sect. In other instances, where the Scribes are distinguished from the Pharisees, the Sadducean doctors may be intended. The badge of a Pharisee was, his placing the tradition of the elders on an equality with scripture; whereas, the Sadducees rejected all the pretended oral traditions, and adhered so close to the text, that they acknowledged nothing as a matter of faith, which was not expressly contained in the sacred books. And in this they were followed by the Karaites or Scripturists, a sect that subsists among the Jews to this day. It is generally supposed, indeed, that the Sadducees acknowledged the authority of none of the sacred books except the writings of Moses. Nevertheless, there is reason to believe that they received all these books; for had they denied the authority of any of them, our Lord, who so sharply reproved their other corruptions, would not have let this escape uncensured. Nay, Josephus himself, who was no friend to the Sadducees, does not in the whole compass of his writings, charge them with rejecting any of the sacred books. He says they rejected the traditions of the elders, so much cried up by the Pharisees, affirming that nothing ought to be held as an institution or rule, but what was written. Archæol. xiii. 18. See the passage translated, Ant. Disc. i. ch. 2 § 3. prefixed to this Harmony. Also see Ant. Disc. i. ch. 3. § 3. Le Clerc, Hist. Eccles. Proleg. p. 1. § 3. Scaliger, Elench. trihæc. contr. Serræ, c. 16. Perhaps, of the sacred writings, the Sadducees preferred the books of Moses. All the Jews did so, and do so still. But whether in this point the Sadducees outstripped the rest of the sects, is hard to say. In the mean time, considering the veneration which the Jews had for the books of the law, it is reasonable to suppose, that some of the doctors of each sect would apply themselves more especially to the study of these books in private, and to the explication of them in public, and that such as did so might obtain the appellation of *lawyers*. Accordingly, he is called by Matthew a Pharisee and a lawyer, xxii. 35. whom Mark calls a Scribe. Farther, it is not improbable that the Pharisean lawyers, fond of their own particular study, might exalt the law not only above the rest of the sacred writings, but above the tradition of the elders, in which respect they were distinguished from the rest of their sect, paying only a secondary sort of regard to these traditions. It was on this account that one of them was now so displeased, when he heard Jesus join the whole body of Scribes indiscriminately, and consequently the lawyers with the Pharisees, in the woes which he now denounced against them, for the hypocritical shew of piety which they made by their zeal in giving tythes of mint, anise, and cumin, according to the precepts of the elders, whilst they omitted judgment and the love of God, enjoined expressly by the divine law. It seems he thought the rebuke undeserved on the part of the lawyers even of the Pharisean sect, because they did not pay that superlative regard to tradition which the rest were remarkable for.



*rises, hypocrites, for ye are as graves which appear not, (ὡς μνημεία τε ἀθάλα) and the men that walk over them are not aware of them* \*. Under a shew of humility and contempt of the world, you are proud, voluptuous and rapacious, so resemble concealed graves, which are apt to pollute those who walk over them.— But a lawyer who was at table, thinking that a rebuke levelled against the Scribes and Pharisees in general, affected the men of his

\* Ver. 44. *Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, &c.*] In the repetition of the woes, Matt. xxiii. 17. this one is differently expressed, *Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, for ye are like unto whited sepulchres (μαργαριτίζετε ταφάς κακοκαρπίους) which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but are within full of dead mens bones, and of all uncleanness, § 121.* Persons of fortune among the Jews, often raised fine stone structures over their dead, especially when they buried them in the fields, and these they white-washed from time to time, to make them look beautiful. Dr Shaw gives the following account of those sepulchres, Travels, pag. 219. “ If we except a few persons, who are buried within the precincts of the sanctuaries of their Marabouts, the rest are carried out at a small distance from their cities and villages, where a great extent of ground is allotted for the purpose. Each family has a particular part of it walled in, like a garden, where the bones of their ancestors have remained for many generations. For in these inclosures, the graves are all distinct and separated, each of them having a stone placed upright both at the head and feet, inscribed with the name or title (2 Kings xxiii. 17.) of the deceased; whilst the intermediate space is either planted with flowers, bordered round with stones, or paved with tiles. The graves of the principal citizens are farther distinguished by having cupolas or vaulted chambers, of three, four, or more square yards built over them; and as these very frequently lie open, and occasionally shelter us from the inclemency of the weather, the demoniac (Mark. v. 5.) might with propriety enough have had his dwelling among the tombs; as others are said (Isa. lxxv. 4.) to remain among the graves and to lodge in the monuments (mountains). And as all these different sorts of tombs and sepulchres, with the very walls likewise of their respective cupolas and inclosures, are constantly kept clean white-washed and beautified, they continue to illustrate those expressions of our Saviour, where he mentions the garnishing of sepulchres, and compares the Scribes, Pharisees, and hypocrites to whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead mens bones and all uncleanness.” But though the sepulchres of the rich were thus beautified, the graves of the poor were oftentimes so neglected, that if the stones by which they were marked happened to fall, they were not set up again, by which means the graves themselves did not appear; they were ἀθάλα, as they are called in the text, so that men might tread on them inadvertently.

By the law, (Num. xix. 16.) graves of all sorts polluted the persons who touched them, the sepulchres that were kept perfectly neat and beautiful, as well as those that were neglected. Hence, to shew the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, our Lord, in the one woe, likened them to graves which did not appear, had no mark to know them by, and which being covered with grass, men were polluted by going over them ere they were aware. In the other woe, he likened them to whited sepulchres, which, though they looked fair and beautiful outwardly, were full of wickedness within. The Scribes and Pharisees, however holy they might appear by their exactness in the externals of religion, were polluted with the grossest vices, inasmuch, that by the contagion of their example, they defiled all who were much in their company.



his order, was exceedingly displeased. Luke xi. 45. *Then answered one of the lawyers, and said unto him, Master, thus saying, thou reproachest us also.* The lawyers, even of the Pharisean denomination, had done unspeakable mischief by their erroneous interpretations of scripture, which they perverted to favour the tradition of the elders as much as possible, and so bound heavy burdens on mens shoulders, which they themselves would not touch with one of their fingers. Jesus therefore spake his mind freely concerning them also, laid open their character, and denounced farther woes against them. 46. *And he said, Woe unto you also, ye lawyers, for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.* Moreover, he blamed them for building the sepulchres of the prophets whom their fathers had killed, because they did it from no regard to the murdered prophets, though in words they pretended to venerate their memory, but from a secret approbation of their fathers deeds, as the general tenor of their conduct too evidently declared. 47. *Woe unto you, for this reason also, that in order to make an ostentation of great piety, ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them:* The prophets, whose sepulchres ye build, were murdered by your fathers, that is, by men precisely of the same character and dispositions with you; hypocrites, who covered the grossest acts of wickedness, with the specious appearance of piety. 48. *Truly ye bear witness, that ye allow the deeds of your fathers:* By all your conduct you shew, that inwardly in your minds you approve of the deeds of your fathers who persecuted the prophets. *For they indeed killed them, and ye build their sepulchres:* From your known dispositions, as well as from your open practice, which is to trample upon the laws of God as often as they stand in the way of your wicked purposes, and particularly from your persecuting the messengers of God, one is obliged to think, that you build the sepulchres of the prophets whom your fathers killed, not from any pious regard to God, whose messengers they were, nor to do honour to the prophets themselves, but to do honour to their murderers, as approving of their deeds, and intending to perpetuate the memory of them to posterity with applause. The great men among the Jews, always possessed the true spirit of politicians. In the time of the prophets, they made no scruple to kill persons whom they knew to be the messengers of God, because forsooth the good of the state required it. In our Saviour's time, Caiaphas the high priest openly avowed this principle in a full meeting of the grandees. For when some were opposing the resolution of the major part of the council, who had determined to kill Jesus, and to shew the inconvenience of that resolution, urged the unlawfulness of the action, he told them plainly that they were a parcel of ignorant bigots, who knew nothing



nothing at all either of the principles or ends of government, which rendered it necessary oft-times to sacrifice the most innocent for the safety of the community. And to say the truth, this is the darling maxim of all politicians. Wherefore, it is not improbable that the Scribes, Pharisees and lawyers, who ruled the Jewish nation at this juncture, might, in repairing the sepulchres of the prophets, really intend to perpetuate the memory of their fathers boldness in putting the prophets to death. For as this was a pattern and precedent which not only directed them how to proceed in cases of extremity, but justified any unlawful action they might happen to commit in the administration of the government, it was by no means proper to suffer the memory thereof to perish. Hence, in repairing the tombs of the prophets, though they pretended to the people that they designed to honour these servants of God, and declared, as it is in the parallel passage, (Matt. xxiii. 30. § 121.) that they would not have embroiled their hands in their blood, their real intention was to perpetuate the memory of their fathers actions. Our Lord, who knew the hearts of men, has expressly said so, and we cannot entertain any doubt of it. *Truly ye bear witness, that ye allow the deeds of your fathers; for they indeed killed them, and ye build their sepulchres.* Luke xi. 49. *Therefore also said the \* wisdom of God, δια τούτο καὶ ἡ σοφία τοῦ θεοῦ ὤρνυται:* For this reason, that you inwardly approve of the deeds of your fathers who killed the prophets, and propose among yourselves to perpetuate the memory of their wickedness, by building the sepulchres of the holy men whom they slew; and also because you imitate their way in your own conduct, by persecuting the messengers of God; in a word, because you carry your wickedness to a greater pitch than they did; for all these reasons, God hath in the council of heaven declared his last resolution concerning you: *I will send them prophets and apostles; and some of them they will slay and persecute: I will send my Son and his apostles unto them, notwithstanding I know they will persecute and slay them.* 50. *That the blood of all the prophets which was shed from the foundation of the world,* (see on Matt. xxiii. 35, 36. § 121.) *may be required of this generation:* That by this last and greatest act of rebellion, the iniquity of the nation being completed, or as it is expressed Matt. xxiii. 32. the measure of their fathers iniquity being filled up, God may at length testify how much he was displeased with the Jewish people from the beginning, for persecuting and murdering

\* Some think, that by *the wisdom of God* here mentioned, we are to understand Christ; because in the parallel passage (Matt. xxiii. 34.) he ascribes this saying to himself, and because the apostle Paul calls him expressly *the wisdom of God*, 1 Cor. i. 24. Others suppose that the Father is meant, the wisdom of God being a periphrasis for God himself, who might be said to speak the words mentioned, because he commissioned his Son to speak them in his name.



dering his prophets, and that by sending upon the generation which completed the iniquity of the nation, such signal judgments as should evidently appear to be the punishment of that great and accumulated wickedness, committed by the nation in its several successive generations. The justice of such a procedure, every thinking person will acknowledge, who considers that sins committed by men as constituting a body politic, can only be punished in the present life, the proper punishment of national sins being national judgments, even such judgments as dissolve the transgressing state. And these the providence of God thinks necessary for its own vindication, always inflicting them upon nations when the measure fixed upon by God for punishment is filled up, that the wrath of God being revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, the nations of the world may be awed and kept in subjection to the government of God.

52. *Woe unto you, lawyers, for ye have taken away the key of knowledge ; ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered :* By your wrong interpretations of scripture, you have filled the people with strong prejudices against the gospel, so that ye not only reject it yourselves, but hinder others from receiving it ; see Matth. xxiii. 13. § 121. The freedom which Jesus now took with the Pharisee and his guests, provoked them exceedingly, for they were guilty of the crimes which he laid to their charge ; and to be revenged, they urged him to speak upon a variety of topics, relative to religion and government, hoping that he might let something drop which would render him obnoxious either to the magistrate or to the people.

53. *And as he said these things unto them, the Scribes and Pharisees began to urge him vehemently, and to provoke him to speak of many things !* 54. *Laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth that they might accuse him.*

§ LXXXVIII. *The charge to the multitude. The parables of the rich glutton, of the servant that waited for the return of his lord, and of the two stewards.* Luke xii. 1,—53.

ON a time when Jesus was preaching in the country beyond Jordan, he was surrounded with an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode upon one another. It was in the hearing of this vast assembly that he gave his disciples in general a charge and exhortation similar to that which he had given to the twelve apostles, after their election\*, § 40. Luke xii. 1.

*In*

\* The two charges being kept distinct, appear with a beautiful propriety. For the order of the history is secured by it, which is a material point. Besides, as our Lord was soon to be received up, (Luke ix. 51.) all the disciples were immediately to be employed according to their ability, in the



*In the mean time, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trod upon one another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. The precept, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees," with which he began his charge to the disciples in general, is parallel to that which in the charge to the twelve runs thus: "Be wise as serpents, and harmless as doves," Matt. x. 16. For though the apostles and disciples were to be remarkably prudent in their behaviour, the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy and deceit, was not to enter into the composition of their prudence, because hypocrisy is only an expedient to serve a turn, the mask being always torn from hypocrites sooner or later. 1. For there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, neither any thing hid that shall not be known. 3. Therefore, whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness, shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets, shall be proclaimed upon the house tops: All your actions shall be brought to light, either in this world, or in the next. Wherefore, take great care never to do any thing which cannot bear the light, but let the whole of your behaviour be fair, honest, and good. This argument against hypocrisy, he improved as a reason for their acquiring another quality, which would serve all the ends they could propose by their hypocrisy, and to much better purpose; an undaunted resolution in the performance of their duty, founded on faith in God, who now governs the world by a particular providence, and in the end will reward or punish every man according to his deeds. 4. And I say unto you, my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do: The utmost effect of the malice of man can extend only to the destruction of your body, they cannot hurt your soul; for which reason you need not be so exceedingly afraid of them, as in any instance to commit sin to avoid their displeasure. 5. But I will forewarn you whom you shall fear: Fear him, which, after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, fear him. Almighty God, after he has killed the body, is able to torment the soul eternally; wherefore, his displeasure is infinitely to be dreaded. Besides, he is a more kind and powerful friend than man. All things are in his hand and keeping. Nothing happens without his permission. He numbers the very hairs of your head; for which reason, his friendship is more to be courted than man's. 6. Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? 7. But even the very hairs of your head*

*the work that was assigned to the twelve; they were to preach the gospel. It was therefore fit that they should all be guided by the same directions, spirited by the same courage, and quickened by the same motives.*



*head are all numbered. Fear not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows: Since God preserves and provides for the meanest of his creatures, you may be very bold under his protection, knowing that your enemies cannot touch a hair of your head without his permission. Withal, to keep yourselves unshaken, ye should often look forward unto the final judgment, at which, I will own you as my servants, if by your constant and cheerful obedience to my commands, you now acknowledge me as your master. Whereas, if ye are ashamed of me and my service now, I will disown you then. 8. Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God; 9. But he that denieth me before men, shall be denied before the angels of God. And as for those who shall revile the Spirit by whom you perform your miracles, my Father will not hold them guiltless; they shall be punished in proportion to the malignity of their crime, which is greater than that of reviling even the Son of man himself. 10. And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven, because he cannot repent; see on Matt. xii. 32. § 48. And though you be illiterate men, who have not the advantages of education, the thought of making your appearance as criminals, whether in public or private, before magistrates and powers, need not perplex you, nor put you on studying regular and learned speeches in your own defence, for ye shall be inspired by the Spirit to speak. 11. And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and unto magistrates and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say: 12. For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.*

While Jesus was thus exhorting his disciples, a certain person in the crowd begged that he would persuade his brother, who probably was present, to divide their paternal inheritance, and give him his share. But, because judging in civil matters was the province of the magistrates, and foreign to the end of our Lord's coming, he refused to meddle in their quarrel. Luke xii. 13. *And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother that he divide the inheritance with me. 14. And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you? It is not said which of these brothers was in the wrong; only because the disposition which they discovered, afforded a fit opportunity for religious advice, our Lord embraced it, and cautioned his hearers in the most solemn manner against covetousness, declaring, that neither the length nor the happiness of a man's life depends upon the greatness of his possessions. 15. And he said unto them, Take heed and beware of covetousness; for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.*

Properly



Properly speaking, *covetousness* is an immoderate love of money. Now, of this passion there are two kinds or forms. One which, in the pursuit of its purpose, does not scruple at fraud, falsehood, and oppression, and which is commonly accompanied with want of kindness and charity. This is the most odious and criminal species of covetousness. The other form of the vice consists in an high esteem of riches as the chief good, in seeking one's happiness from the enjoyments which they procure, and in substituting them in the place of the providence of God, as the best means of preserving our life, supplying our wants, and making us happy. This love of riches is in scripture emphatically termed, *a trusting in them*, and is a sort of covetousness that is abundantly compatible with a regard to justice, being often found in persons no ways remarkable for the want of this virtue. It is against this form of the vice that our Lord's caution is here directed, as is evident from the following parable, which he spake to illustrate his admonition, and to give it the greater weight.

16. *And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully.* This rich man was one who increased his estate, not by unjust gains, but by the produce of his own land, *his ground brought forth plentifully*, the most innocent method possible of making an estate. Nor did his covetousness consist in heaping up wealth without end, even by a method so innocent as that of agriculture: No; the extraordinary fruitfulness of one year's crop fully contented him, for it was so great, that he had no farther care but to contrive how to *bestow his fruits*. And the result of his deliberation was a resolution to pull down his barns, and to build greater.

17. *And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?*

18. *And he said, This will I do, I will pull down my barns and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.* Nor did his covetousness consist in hoarding up the fruits of that one bountiful year; for he laid them up with no other intention but to take the full use of them in every sensual enjoyment which they could afford.

19. *And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thine ease:* cease from the fatigue of business, and even from the labour of thought. Enjoy thyself; *eat, drink, and be merry.* Wherefore this man's covetousness consisted in the satisfaction which he took in his goods and fruits, in his putting an high value upon the pleasures of luxury which they afforded, and in proposing to derive his happiness from them alone, without taking God and religion into his scheme at all.

20. *But God said unto him.* God, who in this man's scheme of happiness, was overlooked, thought fit to shew him the folly he was guilty of, in contemning his Maker, on whom he depended for every thing, and by whose providence alone he lived to enjoy



enjoy any blessing, God told him it was his will that he should die that very night: *Thou fool, this night \* thy soul shall be required of thee*: Thy soul, which thou just now saidst had much goods laid up for many years, and which thou badest take its ease, eat, drink, and be merry. *Then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?* Will they be thine any longer? When thou appearest at my bar, to answer for thy actions, will they buy thee off from punishment? And when thou goest to thy place, will they procure thee one moment's respite from thy torment, or any comfort under it? Luke xii. 21. *So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God.* The covetous sensualist, who, in pursuing riches, has nothing but the gratification of his own appetites in view, no regard to the glory of God, who has commanded men to impart to others the good things which they enjoy, by traffic, by beneficence, and by almsgiving according as prudence directs; but especially by almsgiving, because he reckons what is given to the poor as lent to himself, Prov. xix. 17. The man who thus lives only for himself, without putting any part of his riches, by good works, into God's hand, as a stock for eternity, is as great a fool, and as far from real happiness, as the glutton in the parable, who proposed nothing with his riches but eating and drinking, and merry-making, little suspecting that he was but a few hours from death. Thus, in the parable of the rich glutton, who being cut off in the midst of his projects, was a remarkable instance of the madness of amassing the goods of this life, without due regard had to piety, to the commandments of God, and to the good of others, Jesus has set before mankind a lively and affecting example of the bewitching influence of wealth, and of the evil of passionately pursuing it, consequently hath given unspeakable weight to his caution against covetousness. The sensual fool, forgetting his mortality, made preparation for a long, luxurious, delightful way of life, which he would not allow himself to see the end of, and without any purpose of doing the least good to others, either by acts of beneficence or charity, pleased himself exceedingly with the thought of possessing an inexhaustible fund of sensual enjoyments. In the mean time, the inexorable hand of death seized upon him, and that very night hurried him before the tribunal of God, where his goods and fruits could stand him in no stead. Wherefore, in this parable, we have a perfect picture of the men  
whose

\* Ver. 20. *Thy soul shall be required of thee.*] *Τὴν ψυχὴν οὐ απαιτοῦσι ἀπὸ σου,* "They shall demand thy life from thee." To preserve the literal meaning of the words, it may be supposed that thieves brake into this glutton's house, and robbed him of his life, together with his riches; or rather, according to an use of the plural number, very familiar in the Hebrew language, these words may signify no more but that his life should be taken away, without determining whether angels, as executioners of the divine decree, or men should take it.



whole affections are ingrossed by the things of this present life. They forget that riches, honours and power are bestowed on them in trust. They do not consider that God has put them into their hands for the good of others, also in order to their own improvement in virtue, by the opportunities which they afford of exercising good dispositions. They rather look upon those advantages merely as instruments of luxury, and use them accordingly. But at the very time they are inwardly applauding themselves in having such an abundance of the means of pleasure, and are laying schemes for futurity as if they were never to die, and are thinking of nothing but happy days, God suddenly strips them of all their joys. While they are idly busy in gathering together the treasures of an ant-hillock, or in building childrens tottering piles, the foot of death treads them down, and spurs all abroad ; so that they and their projects perish at once. 5

Our Lord having spoken the parable of the rich glutton, proceeded in the charge ; and because a hurry of business is oftentimes a great enemy to religious dispositions, he cautioned his disciples against anxious cares about the world, from the consideration of God's providence, which is so extensively perfect as to comprehend all his works great and small without exception. Luke xii. 22. *And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, take no thought for your life what ye shall eat, neither for the body what ye shall put on.* The caution to beware of covetousness, and the parable of the rich glutton, whereby he enforced that caution, were spoken to the contending covetous brothers, and to the multitude ; this part of his discourse he directed to his disciples, founding it upon the caution and parable which he had just now delivered, as if he had said, Since a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth, since plenty of goods and fruits is not capable of prolonging a man's life one moment beyond the term fixed for it by God, ye, my disciples, more especially ought for that reason to take no thought for the prolongation of your life, by anxiously laying up a store of provisions and of clothes, as if these could preserve life : No ; you should consider that, 23. *The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment.* You should also, 24. *Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which neither have store-house nor barn, and God feedeth them : How much more are ye better than the fowls ?* 25. *And which of you, with taking thought, can add to his stature one cubit ?* 26. *If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest ?* 27. *Consider the lilies how they grow : they toil not, they spin not ; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.* 28. *If then God so clothe the grass, which is to-day in the field, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith ?*



29. *And seek not what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind.* 30. *For all these things do the nations of the world seek after; and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.* 31. *But rather seek ye the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you.* His sentiments here are great and sublime, being the same with those contained in the sermon on the mount, (Matt. vi. 25. § 26. which see) the following argument excepted. 32. *Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom:* Since God hath destined you to everlasting happiness hereafter, he will surely bestow on you the necessities of the present life. This part of the charge may be considered as parallel to the directions given to the twelve, Matt. x. 9. "Provide neither gold," &c. i. e. make no provision for your journey, but rely wholly on the providence of God. Only he now added a precept peculiarly calculated for those times, in which the profession of the gospel exposed men to the loss of all their goods; see on Matth. xix. 21. § 105. 33. *Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves with bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that fail-eth not, where no thief approacheth, nor moth corrupteth.* 34. *For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also:* By bestowing your wealth in charity, send it before you unto heaven, where it shall lie secure from all accidents, and be a source of eternal joys to you. And if your treasure be thus laid up in heaven, your heart will be there; consequently your dispositions, actions and hopes will be all heavenly. This counsel was designed principally for the apostles, who being chosen from among all the disciples to go out into the world and convert mankind, could have no fixed possessions consistently with the duties of their function; neither had they any occasion for them, being the peculiar charge of Providence. Besides, that the first preachers of the gospel should be poor, was altogether necessary; because, if it had been otherwise, the world might have suspected that the tie which united them in the great undertaking of converting the world, was of a secular and selfish nature; see on Matt. xix. 21. § 105. However, though this direction was given to the apostles in particular, the disciples in general seem to have followed it after the day of Pentecost, when they sold their possessions, and put the price of them into a common stock, wherewith they supported their brethren. For I think it can hardly be doubted that their behaviour in this matter proceeded from the regard which they paid to Christ's admonition, joined with their charitable dispositions, and their expectations of better possessions in the Messiah's kingdom. Nevertheless, from what Peter said to Ananias, Acts v. 4. we learn, that this precept did not absolutely oblige them, being calculated, as was already observed, for the apostles.

Having



Having thus recommended disengagement of affection from the things of this world, he ordered them to be in constant readiness to discharge their duty. Luke xii. 35. *Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning.* 36. *And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding, that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.* This is in allusion to the customs of the East, where anciently great entertainments were made in the evening, so that night was commonly far spent before the guests were dismissed. On such occasions, servants shewed their faithfulness by watching and keeping their lamps burning, and their loins girded, that they might be ready to open the door to their master on the first knock. The master, pleased with the care of such a servant, would order him a refreshment, after having watched and fasted so long; and if he was of a very humane disposition, he might even bring it himself, and give it him out of his own hand. Accordingly it is added, 37. *Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them sit down to meat, and will come forth, and serve them.* By this similitude Jesus intimated to his disciples how acceptable their zeal in discharging the duties of their function would be to him, and how highly he would reward them for it. This constant watchfulness and habitual preparation, he enforced from the consideration of the uncertainty of his coming, telling them, that as there is no master of a family but would make some preparation against a thief, if he knew of his coming, so it would be no great matter if they should make some slight preparation on receiving certain information of his approach; for which reason, their zeal could only shew itself by keeping them in constant readiness, as they did not know what hour he would come. 38. *And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so doing, blessed are those servants.* 39. *And this know, that if the good man of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through;* see on ver. 56. 40. *Be ye therefore ready also; for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.*

Peter, who had been giving great attention to the whole of this sermon, was, it seems, at a loss to know whether the parable of the watching servants was spoken to the multitude in general, or to the apostles in particular. He therefore begged his Master to satisfy him as to that point. Luke xii. 41. *Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all?* It was directed to all the disciples, but it contained instructions which Peter thought were peculiar to the twelve. Accordingly, by the parable of the two stewards, Jesus shewed him, that though his exhortations were directed to all, they had a more especial



pecial relation to those who are intrusted with the care of the souls of others. 42. *And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? What do you think ought to be the character and conduct of a steward to whom his lord committeth the care of his family in his absence, as I do the care of my church to you? Why certainly he should be both wise, to know in what manner to govern the family, and faithful in executing whatever his wisdom and prudence direct as fit to be done; for thus only, all the members of the family under his care will have due provision made for them.*

43. *Blessed is that servant whom his lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing.* To complete the character of such a steward, he must never remit his diligence and care, that so, at whatever time his Lord returns, he may find him employed in the prudent and faithful discharge of the duties of his office. If this is the case, such a servant shall be happy, not only in the consciousness of doing his duty well, but in the rewards and honours which his lord will bestow upon him. 44. *Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he bath:* He will commit the management of his whole estate to him; a trust which such a servant meriteth, by the prudence and faithfulness which he shewed as steward of the household. On the other hand, consider attentively the character and punishment of a bad steward, that you may avoid both. 45. *But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming:* if any steward who has the care of his lord's family committed to him, yielding to the wickedness of his own disposition, shall take occasion from his lord's long absence to behave unfaithfully in his duty, *and shall begin to beat the men servants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken:* shall behave tyrannically towards his fellow-servants, and give himself up to gluttony and drunkenness, wasting their provisions in riotous living with his own companions: 46. *The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware:* Such a course of rioting and drunkenness will stupify that servant, so that he will not foresee his lord's coming, nor know of it till he is in the house, so that he shall be caught in the very acts of his mismanagement, and shall have exemplary punishment inflicted upon him, proportionable to the greatness of his offences, *and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers:* His wickedness having proceeded from his not believing the rewards and punishments of a future state, he shall have his portion in that state with the Sadducees, of whose sect he was; this circumstance is added according to the meaning, rather than the form of the parable. See the moral application of this parable, on Matth.

xxiv. 46. § 123. But lest the consideration of the strictness of the



the account, and the greatness of the punishment described in the parable, might terrify men of honest dispositions, who are liable to err merely through weakness, Jesus shewed them, that as offences differ greatly in their circumstances and aggravations, so shall they differ in their punishments also. 47. \* *And that servant which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.* 48. *But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more:* In the divine administration, the rule of judgment shall be observed which men themselves think just, and put in practice in their commerce one with another. The more advantages any one enjoys, the greater improvement will be expected of him, and the more severely will he be punished if he comes short. Jesus concluded the charge, with foretelling the divisions that should be occasioned by his gospel. 49. *I am come to send fire on the earth,* (see on Matt. x. 34. § 40.) *and what will I, if it be already kindled?* τι δὲ ἔχω, what will I? Do I wish to escape that fire myself, if it be already kindled? The fire he here speaks of as the effect of his coming, being the fire of division and persecution, it was already kindled, and was about to seize himself: but by this question, and what he immediately subjoined, he declared he was willing to be the first victim who should be consumed in that fire. 50. *But I have a baptism to be baptized with,* (see on Matt. xx. 23. § 106.) *and how am I straitened,* πως συνχομαι, how am I pressed in spirit, (see the phrase complete, Acts xviii. 5.) *till it be accomplished?* 51. *Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on the earth,* by subduing all the nations of the world into one great monarchy under the Jews? *I tell you, nay, but rather division.* 52. *For from henceforth, on account of the introduction of the Christian religion, there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three.* 53. *The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother-in-law*

\* Ver. 47. *And that servant which knew his lord's will, &c.*] To understand this part of our Lord's discourse, we must suppose that the steward here spoken of, had received full instruction from his lord either before his departure or afterwards by letters, how he was to employ himself and the servants under his care. Wherefore, if he neglected his duty he was more to blame than the inferior servants, who had no knowledge of their lord's will but from the steward, who might conceal it from them, if he had a mind to serve any bye-end of his own. In this respect, how fitly does the parable describe the aggravations of the sin of the ministers and teachers of religion, who have such singular advantages for knowing Christ's will! In this light, it shews the justice of the more severe punishments here denounced as to be inflicted on them, for such wilful neglects and miscarriages as they are found to be guilty of in the discharge of their office.



*law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law : So high a value shall mankind put upon my religion, that for its sake they shall forego the friendship and affection of their nearest and dearest relations, who will persecute them bitterly, because they have cast off their paternal worship.*

§ LXXXIX. *The multitude is reproved for not discerning the times. Galileans are slain by Pilate. The parable of the barren fig-tree. Luke xii. 54,—59. xiii. 1,—9.*

WHEN Jesus had done speaking to his disciples, he addressed the unbelieving multitude, which on this occasion was gathered together, and stood round hearing the instructions which he gave to his disciples, see ver. 1. Luke xii. 54. *And he said also to the people, When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower, and so it is. The Mediterranean Sea lying west from Judea, the clouds and showers usually came from that quarter. See 1 Kings xviii. 44,—55. And when ye see the south wind blow, ye say, There will be heat, and it cometh so pass.* The wind which is south to Judea, blowing over the hot sands of Arabia and Egypt, occasions a great heat in the air. Those which are properly called the hot winds in that climate, are so hot, that they bring on a fainting and difficulty of breathing. See Antiq. Disc. vii. No. 11. Luke xii. 56. *Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth : but how is it, that ye cannot discern this time ?* Since ye can form a judgment of the weather that shall happen, by the signs appearing in the earth and sky, such as the colour of the sky, the motion of the clouds, and the blowing of the winds, what is the reason that ye do not discover this time by its signs ? He meant the time of the Messiah's appearing on earth to accomplish the salvation of the world, according to the ancient prophecies. See on Mark viii. 11. Matt. xvi. 1. § 68. Also the time of his coming to destroy the Jewish nation, which he had described under the similitude of one who comes secretly and unexpectedly to rob a house, ver. 39, 40. § 88. The prediction of the coming of the Son of man to punish the Jews for their perfidy and rebellion, was a loud call to a national repentance. Wherefore, as the improvement of that prediction, he exhorted them to a speedy reformation, telling them, that common sense, with a very small degree of reflection, would point it out to them as the very best thing they could do, for averting the impending judgments of God. 57. *Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right ?* The evils which befall obdurate sinners, he illustrated by the punishment which in ordinary cases is inflicted upon the man who obstinately refuses to give compensation for the injuries he has done. Even while his adversary is haling him to the judge, he will not agree the matter. He is therefore brought by force to the bar.

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The judge condemns him. The officer seizes upon him. He is cast into prison, and lies there till he has paid the very last mite. 58. *When thou goest with thine adversary to the magistrate, as thou art in the way, give diligence that thou mayest be delivered from him; lest he hale thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and the officer cast thee into prison.* 59. *I tell thee, thou shalt not depart thence till thou hast paid the very last mite.*

The foregoing doctrine some of his hearers thought proper to confirm by what they supposed an example of it. Luke xiii. 1. *There were present at that season, some that told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.* For the scope and connection of the passage, as well as Christ's answer, shew it to have been the thought of these persons, that Providence had permitted the Galileans to be massacred at their devotions, for some extraordinary wickedness. 2. *And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things?* His hearers had insinuated a very wrong notion of Providence; for which cause, Jesus not only condemned it in the question just now mentioned, but he told them expressly, that these Galileans were not to be reckoned greater sinners than others, because they had fallen by so severe a calamity, and exhorted them, instead of forming harsh judgments of others from such examples of sufferings, to improve them as excitements unto themselves to repent, assuring them that if they did not, they should all likewise perish. 3. *I tell you, nay; but except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish.* Farther, by putting them in mind of the eighteen persons on whom the tower in Siloam fell, a calamity more immediately from the hand of God, and which overwhelmed people who perhaps had been remarkable for their piety and goodness, he shewed them the folly of interpreting the dispensations of Providence in that manner. 4. *Or those eighteen, upon whom \* the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem?* Luke xiii. 5. *I tell you, nay; but except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish.* He repeated his exhortation to repentance, and forewarned them a second

\* Ver. 4. *The tower in Siloam, &c.*] The tower in Siloam, by its name, appears to have been built beside the basin or pool of Siloam, (see on John ix. 7. § 79.) whose waters running into a lower basin, formed what was called the *pool of fleeces*, probably from the sheep which were washed in it. The upper basin, or pool of Siloam, seems to have been used as a bathing place for men; and if it had porticos round it for them to undress in, will answer to the description of the pool of Bethesda, John v. 2. Besides, the situation of Bethesda, hard by the sheep gate, agrees with this supposition; for that gate had its name from the sheep-market which was kept at it, and to which the sheep were driven after having been washed in the pool of fleeces. The tower in Siloam, therefore, which fell and slew the eighteen persons here mentioned, may have been one of the porticos of Bethesda.



second time of their danger, because it was fast approaching and they had no time to lose. Except ye repent, ye shall all perish in like manner, i. e. shall perish either by the sword, or in the ruins of your houses; for he seems to have had the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in his eye, together with the other calamities which about that time were to fall on the nation in general, on account of their misimprovement of the advantages which they had so long enjoyed. Moreover, to rouse them the more, he spake the parable of the fig-tree that was ordered to be rooted out after \* three years barrenness, and which, though the gardener

\* The three years in the parable which the master of the vineyard came seeking fruit on the fig-tree, is supposed by many to represent the ministry of Christ, which from this they conclude lasted only three years. But the argument has no force in it, because the other year which it was allowed to remain, evidently comprehends the space of forty years; so long time having passed between Christ's ascension, and the destruction of Jerusalem. Wherefore, the years in the parable denote, as above, the whole duration of the Jewish dispensation, very properly represented by a term of three years, in a parable taken from the fig-tree, whose fruit does not come to maturity till the third year. See Jewish Ant. Disc. vii. No. 1. But though this parable was originally meant of the Jews, it may be applied to men in every age; for it exhibits a law observed in the divine administration, which should strike terror into all who enjoy spiritual privileges without improving them. Every man is allowed a certain time of trial, during which he enjoys the means and helps necessary to virtue. If he continues ignorant of his visitation, despises the riches of the divine mercy, and goes on obstinately in sin, these advantages are commonly taken away from him, his day of grace ends, the utmost term of God's patience is past for ever, the divine spirit being grieved, is provoked to depart, and the man is delivered over to an hardened heart; after which his repentance and salvation become impossible.

According to some, Jesus left the country beyond Jordan about this time, and went into Galilee. They draw their opinion from Luke xiii. 31. which plainly says, that Jesus was in Herod's dominions then. But the answer is, the country beyond Jordan, where I suppose him to have been at this time, was under Herod's jurisdiction, Jos. Ant. xvii. 13. Accordingly, Luke xvii. 11. we are told, that soon after this, Jesus passed through the middle of Samaria and Galilee, in his way to Jerusalem. Having travelled far into Perea north-eastwards, he returned by slow journeys to Jerusalem, Luke xiii. 22. *And he went through the cities and villages, teaching and journeying towards Jerusalem.* While he was preaching in those cities and villages, the Pharisees advised him to leave that country, because Herod was going to kill him. But he despised their threatenings, and abode in Perea till he was called into Judea by a message from the sisters of Lazarus, John xi. 3. During that period, he dined with a Pharisee who was a member of the Sanhedrim, and had his country seat in Perea, Luke xiv. 1. cured the man afflicted with the dropsy, and spake the parable of the marriage-supper. On another occasion, he spake the parables of the lost sheep, &c. the history of which is given in the 15th and 16th chapters of Luke. Soon after that he was informed of Lazarus' sickness, and left the country beyond Jordan, taking the lower Galilee in his way to Bethany. For though he did not cross the Jordan till Lazarus died, he had abundance of time to go into Galilee, Lazarus having been no less than four days in his grave by the time our Lord arrived at Bethany. See however a different translation of Luke xvii. 11. § 99. in the note.



gardener earnestly pleaded for it, was spared but one year longer. 6. *He spake also this parable: A certain man had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard, and because it was planted in good soil with a convenient exposure, he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none.* 7. *Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none: The length of time it has been barren, shews that it is good for nothing, and will never bear any fruit: Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground? Root it out, and throw it away, for it is a nuisance in my vineyard.* 8. *And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it and dung it.* Luke xiii. 9. *And if it bear fruit, well; and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.* This parable representeth the goodness of God towards the Jews, in chusing them for his people, and in giving them the outward dispensations of religion; also the improvement which God expected they were to make of these advantages, and the punishment he was to inflict on them for their unfruitfulness. His mercy likewise in sparing them at the intercession of his Son, under whose care they were, and in giving them a farther time of trial, and greater advantages, by the preaching of Christ and his apostles, is beautifully held forth in it; and at the conclusion an insinuation is made, that if they continued impenitent under these last and best means, no more pains was to be taken upon them, but they were to be destroyed without remedy. Accordingly, this happened about forty years after our Lord's death. Wherefore, this parable may be considered likewise as a prophecy of the destruction of the Jewish state, by the Romans, under Vespasian and Titus.

§ XC. *In Perea, the woman that was bowed down is cured. The parables of the grain of mustard seed, and of the leaven, are delivered a second time.* See § 52, 53. Luke xiii. 10,—21.

JESUS happening to preach in one of the synagogues of Perea on a sabbath-day, cast his eyes upon a woman in the congregation, that had not been able to stand upright during the space of eighteen years; wherefore, pitying her affliction, he restored her body to its natural soundness. Luke xiii. 10. *And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath.* 11. *And behold there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in nowise lift up herself.* What the evangelist means by a *spirit of infirmity* we learn from our Lord, who explains it thus, verse 8. "A daughter of Abraham whom Satan hath bound, lo these eighteen years." 12. *And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.* 13. *And he laid his hands on her, and immediately she was made straight and glorified God.* The great favour now conferred on her so suddenly,



filled her with admiration and gratitude, in so much that she both offered up thanksgiving to God, to whom piously and wisely she referred her recovery, and acknowledged the mission of the prophet by whom God had conferred it upon her ; nay, she did this openly with a loud voice, in the hearing of the congregation. But the benevolent miracle 'offended the ruler of the synagogue to such a degree, that he could not forbear testifying his displeasure at it publicly ; for he reprov'd the people in a surly manner as sabbath breakers, because they came to be healed on that day. Luke xiii. 14. *And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath-day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work : in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day.* But the Lord soon put this hypocritical ruler to silence, by placing the action which he found fault with, in the light of their own avowed practice. They loosed and led their cattle on the sabbath to water, and thought the mercy of the work justified them in so doing. He, by uttering a word only, had loosed a woman, a reasonable creature, and a daughter of Abraham, that had been bound with an incurable distemper, not for a single day, but so long a time as eighteen years. Without doubt the far greater mercy of this and the other god-like works which Jesus did, justified his performing them on the sabbath, as the ruler might easily have seen, had he not been wholly blinded by his superstition. 15. *The Lord then answered him, and said, Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox, or his ass, from the stall, and lead him away to watering ?* 16. *And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath-day ?* 17. *And when he said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed ; and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him.* The folly even of the men of learning among the Jews, conspicuous in this and some other instances mentioned in the gospels, shews the malignant nature of superstition. It is capable of extinguishing reason, of banishing compassion, and of eradicating the most essential principles and feelings of the human mind.

After the Lord had thus silenced the ruler of the synagogue, and whilst he observed the rejoicings of the people, he reflected with pleasure on the reason and truth which so effectually supported his kingdom. For he spake a second time the parables of the grain of mustard-seed, and of the leaven, to shew the efficacious operation of the gospel upon the minds of men, and its speedy propagation through the world, in spite of all opposition. Luke xiii. 18. *Then said he, Unto what is the kingdom of God like ? and whereunto shall I resemble it ?* 19. *It is like a grain of mustard-seed which a man took and cast into his garden ; and*  
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*it grew and waxed a great tree : and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it. (See § 52.) 20. And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God ? 21. It is like leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till the whole was leavened. See § 53.*

§ XCI. *Concerning the number of the saved. Jesus is desired to leave Herod's dominions. He bewails Jerusalem the first time. See § 111. 121. Luke xiii. 22,—35.*

OUR Lord was now travelling by slow journeys towards Jerusalem, being on his way to the Jordan from the north-east parts of Perea. See the last paragraph of the last note on § 89. Somewhere on the road, probably soon after he had described the success of the gospel by the parables of the mustard and the leaven, his opinion was asked concerning the number of the saved. Luke xiii. 22. *And he went through the cities and villages, teaching and journeying towards Jerusalem. 23 Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved ?* The person who proposed this question seems to have heard the parables above mentioned. If he did, his notions of the kingdom of God being such as the Jews at that time entertained, he perhaps meant a temporal salvation by admission into the Messiah's kingdom. But as no secular kingdom was ever to be erected by their great deliverer, Jesus answered the question in its spiritual meaning. Or we may suppose, that this Jew enquired concerning the eternal salvation of men. For though he could easily believe that all his brethren were to be saved, yet he could not so easily bring himself to believe that salvation was confined to his own nation. Wherefore, having an high opinion of Jesus as a teacher, he proposed his doubts to him. But in whatever sense we understand this question, our Lord's answer contains an exhortation which implies, that a small number of Jews only should be saved. Luke xiii. *And he said unto them, 24. Strive to enter in at the strait gate :* By enquiring thus curiously into the state of others, you seem to be at ease with respect to your own salvation. I must therefore tell you, that though as Jews you have great advantages, the gate to life is still strait ; and that if you would be saved, you must exert yourself to the utmost. Of this you will be the more convinced, when I assure you, that many of your brethren, who, because they trusted to their privileges as Jews, lived all along securely, shall be for ever excluded from heaven, *for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able :* that is, shall seek to enter in at an improper season, namely, by importunate intreaties, after the period of their trial is concluded, and their state finally and irreversibly determined, as is evident from what follows. 25. *When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without,*



without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence you are: On this occasion Jesus repeated what he had formerly delivered in the sermon on the mount. \*26. *Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets.* Over and above the privileges which you have enjoyed by the Mosaic dispensation, you shall plead on that occasion the peculiar favour which I shewed you in the days of my flesh, by exercising my ministry among you, and by conversing familiarly with you. 27. *But he shall say, I tell you, I know not whence you are: I disclaim all knowledge of, and friendship with you; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.* He repeated likewise what he had declared in praise of the centurion's faith, Matt. viii. 11. § 28. 28. *There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.* 29. *And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.* 30. *And behold there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.* Here therefore, as well as in Matthew, our Lord plainly affirms, that many others besides Jews shall be saved.

Luke xiii. 31. *The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out, and depart hence, for Herod will kill thee.* From the known disposition of the Pharisees, who were always enemies to Christ, as well as from his answer, it is more than probable that their concern for his safety was feigned, and that their real design was to intimidate him, and make him flee into Judea, not doubting that the haughty priests would fall upon some method of putting him to death. Herod too seems to have been in the plot. He now began to take umbrage at Christ's fame and authority, fearing that it might occasion him some embarrassment either with his people, or with the Romans. But he dreaded to make an attempt on his life, remembering the agonies of mind he had suffered on account of the Baptist's murder. He therefore sent the Pharisees to him with the message above mentioned. Thus we see the reason why Jesus reproved Herod, whose name might otherwise have been innocently used by the Pharisees. Luke xiii. 32. *And he said unto them, Go ye and tell that fox, he called Herod a fox, because of the craft which he shewed in this affair, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures \* to-day and to-morrow, and the third day*

\* Ver. 32. *To-day and to-morrow, &c.*] Some apply this to the years of Christ's ministry, supposing that a day is put for a year. But the explication is improper; because if the three days here mentioned were intended to comprehend the whole years of our Lord's ministry, this conversation must



*I shall be perfected.* He added, I know all that is to befall me: I know who are my enemies, what their intentions are, and how far they will be able to accomplish them; for which reason, you need give yourselves no trouble about me. 33. *Nevertheless, I must walk to-day, and to-morrow, and the day following:* no malice or power of men can hinder me from accomplishing my ministry; *for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.* As the court of priests, whose prerogative it was to judge prophets, had its seat in Jerusalem, our Lord, by putting the Pharisees in mind that a prophet could not perish out of Jerusalem, insinuated that he knew their intentions too well to pay any regard to their advice. Or, in making this observation, his design may have been to display the wickedness of that city, the inhabitants of which had been in every age the chief enemies of the messengers of God, in so much that none of them were put to death any where else. And to this agrees what our Lord says of Jerusalem, in the pathetic lamentation which he now uttered concerning it, on account of its crimes, its obstinacy, and its punishment. 34. *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!* 35. *Behold your house is left unto you desolate; your temple will, in a little time, be totally deprived of my presence; and verily I say unto you, ye shall not see me until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.* After your house is become desolate by my departure, ye shall not see me till the time come when ye shall say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Jesus lamented the city a second time as he rode into it, a little before his passion. See on Matth. xxiii. 37. § 121.

must have happened in the first year thereof; contrary to Luke himself who tells us, chap. ix. 51. that the time was come, that he should be received up. Besides, according to this interpretation, Christ's being perfected on the third day will imply, that he was to suffer in the third year of his ministry, which is far from being a certain point. Were we to conclude any thing concerning the length of our Lord's ministry from the days mentioned, it would be, that he did not suffer till the third year after this conversation. But the real meaning of the words seems to be as follows: I shall not be very long with you on earth; yet while I am here, I will perform the duties of my ministry, without being afraid of any man; because my life cannot be taken from me, but in the place, and at the time, appointed by God.

§ XCII. *Jesus dines with Pharisees the third time; see § 43. 87. The parable of the marriage-supper; see § 116. Luke xiv. 1,—24.*

ABOUT this time one of the Pharisees, who was a member of the great council, (τις τῶν μεγίστων Φαρισαίων) and had his country-seat



try-seat in Perea, happening to meet with Jesus while he abode there, carried him home to dinner. But the invitation was insidious; for we are told that *they watched him*. Our Lord however accepted it with his usual condescension; for he never shunned to do all manner of good, even to his bitterest enemies, though it was often attended with great danger to himself. Luke xiv. 1. *And it came to pass, as he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the sabbath-day, that they watched him.* The chief Pharisee and others of his sect, who were gathered together for this very end, (ver. 3.) watched all his words and actions, in order that they might find something to blame in them, whereby they hoped to blast his reputation as a prophet. To make their scheme take effect, no sooner did Jesus enter into this Pharisee's house, than they set before him a man whose body was prodigiously swollen with the dropsy. For that this diseased person was brought in by the Pharisees themselves with an intention to ensnare Jesus, is evident from what followed. Besides, the man would not otherwise have found admission into the house of so great a person, far less into the hall where the company was to dine, and that too immediately before dinner. 2. *And behold, there was a certain man before him which had the dropsy.* The Pharisees made no doubt that Jesus would cure him, and hoped to bring discredit both upon the miracle and its author, by the day whereon it was performed; for according to the tradition of the elders, the sabbath admitted of no servile work whatever, such as they judged a cure to be. In the meantime, Jesus knowing their thoughts, asked the Pharisees and the lawyers, whether it was right to perform cures on the sabbath? But they all held their peace, not caring perhaps to hinder him. 3. *And Jesus answering, spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath-day?* 4. *And they held their peace.* And he took him (*ἐπιλαβόμενος* he laid his hand on him) and healed him, and let him go; (*καὶ ἀπέλυσε* and sent him away). The moment that Jesus laid his hand on the man, his complexion returned, and his body was reduced to its ordinary dimensions, becoming at the same time vigorous and fit for action, as appeared by the manner in which he went out of the room. Doubtless our Lord could have accomplished this cure as well by a secret volition, and so might have cut off all matter of cavilling. But he chose rather to produce it by an action, in which there was the very least degree of bodily labour that could be, because thus he had an opportunity of reproving the reigning superstition of the times. Accordingly, whilst the Pharisees were considering with themselves how to turn the miracle against him, he disconcerted them, by proving the lawfulness of what he had done, from their own practice. 5. *And answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and*



*and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath-day ? Will ye, for fear of breaking the sabbath, let it pass before ye attempt to draw the beast out, and not rather make all the haste you can to save its life, though it should cost you a great deal of work ? But the labour of this cure was barely that Jesus had laid his hand on the man. His argument therefore was what the grossest stupidity could not overlook, nor the most virulent malice contradict. 6. And they could not answer him again to these things.* What he said was so consonant to common sense and common practice, that they had not a word to reply. They were much ashamed therefore and vexed at their disappointment, having gathered together and invited him in, with a design to ensnare him.

Before dinner, the pride of the Pharisees discovered itself in the anxiety which each of them expressed to get the chief places at table. Jesus took notice of it, and shewed them both the evil and the folly of their behaviour by its consequences. He mentioned this in particular, that pride exposes a man to many affronts, every one being desirous to mortify a vain person ; whereas humility is the surest way to respect. Luke xiv. 7. *And he put forth a parable to \* those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms, saying unto them, 8. When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room, lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him ; 9. And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place, and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room. 10. But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room ; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher : then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee. 11. For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted, both by God and man.*

In time of dinner, Jesus directed his discourse to the person that had invited him, and shewed him what sort of people he should bid to his feasts. Luke xiv. 12. *Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours only, lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee : by no means confine thy hospitality to thy rich relations, acquaintance, and neighbours, lest the whole of thy reward be an invitation from them to a like entertainment. For that the*  
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\* Ver. 7. *Those which were bidden.*] From this circumstance, and from what is said verie 12. it appears that this was a great entertainment, to which many were invited. Very probably therefore the meeting was concerted, and the company chosen, with a view to ensnare Jesus, as we have hinted in the paraphrase ; so that his being invited, was a matter, not of accident, but of design.



text here, as in some other instances, (see Luke vi. 32. § 38. Matt. xii. 37. § 48. John v. 31. 34. 45. § 45. vi. 27. § 62. vii. 22. § 76.) requires the addition of the particle *only* to limit it, appears from this, that our Lord cannot be supposed to exclude from the entertainments of the rich all who are not objects of charity, or to forbid every sort of expence which hath not the poor for its immediate object. His going to entertainments frequently, as well as his suffering himself to be thrice anointed with precious ointment, shew plainly that the obligations we are under of being charitable to the poor, does not hinder us from doing honour to those we esteem, though it should be attended with considerable expence. From this example, therefore, as well as from many others which might be mentioned, it appears that in the revelation which God has made of his will to men, he considers them as rational creatures, having left them, in the explication and application of his laws, to use the faculties of reason and understanding which he has bestowed on them. 13. *But when thou makest a feast, call also the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind:* Have tables also for the poor, that they may partake of thy entertainments; or rather call them to attend at thy gate, and receive a portion; for he does not mean that they are to be set down at the principal table, but that they are to be desired to come and receive the offals. Now, as in all our Lord's precepts, there is the highest wisdom, so in this. He designed that objects of distress should appear before the rich, even during their greatest mirth and jollity, in order that at such seasons they might be sensible of the exceeding instability of human affairs; a sentiment which can scarce fail to restrain them within due bounds. At least it will soften their hearts with pity, and fill them with gratitude to the bountiful Giver of all good, who has graciously been pleased to render their condition thus happy. These however were not the topics whereby Jesus enforced his advice to the Pharisee, they were drawn from the consideration of the more immediate effects of the charity. Persons of this sort, said he, being fed from thy table thou shalt be blessed; because, though they cannot make thee any recompence, thou shalt have an abundant reward at the resurrection of the just. Luke xiv. 14. *And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee, for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.* 15. *And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.* The Jews were accustomed to think of the felicity of good men in the life to come, under the notion of a sumptuous entertainment; see on Matt. viii. 11. § 28. Wherefore, when Jesus mentioned the resurrection of the just, one of the guests, ravished with the delightful prospect, cried out, Blessed is he, who being admitted into heaven, shall enjoy the conversation of.



of the inhabitants of that glorious place ; for these spiritual repasts must regale and invigorate his mind beyond expression. Perhaps in this exclamation the Pharisee meant both to congratulate the felicity of his countrymen, who looked upon themselves as the children of the kingdom, and to condole the lot of the heathens, who, as he imagined, were all to be excluded from heaven. Therefore, to shew him his error, our Lord delivered the parable of the marriage-feast, in which, by the invitations of the guests, and the success of these invitations, he described the success which the gospel, the invitation to the great feast of heaven, should meet with among the Jews ; and foretold, that though it was to be offered to them with every circumstance that could recommend it, they would reject it with disdain, preferring the present life to that which is to come ; while the Gentiles would embrace the gospel with cheerfulness, and thereby be prepared to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the abodes of the blessed. 16. *Then said he unto him, A certain man, possessed of an opulent fortune, and endued with generous dispositions, made a great supper, at which he designed his friends and acquaintance should be happy for an evening, both in the elegance of the entertainment and in one another's conversation, and bade many.* The number of guests he proposed to entertain was suitable to the generosity of his disposition, the opulence of his fortune, and the greatness of this particular feast. Withal, that they might have time to disengage themselves from business, and to dress themselves suitably to the occasion, an invitation was sent them on the day preceding the feast. Supper then being prepared, and the appointed hour being come, a servant was sent to the guests to give them notice that every thing was ready, and that their presence was wanted. 17. *And sent his servant at supper-time to say to them that were bidden, Come, for all things are now ready.* But those men, who when they were invited did not any of them refuse to come, were so ill-mannered and so ungrateful, that at the very time when supper was going to be served up, they all with one consent began to tell the messenger they would not come, and excused themselves on the most frivolous pretences imaginable. 18. *And they all with one consent, i. e. as if they had before-hand agreed among themselves to put this affront upon their friend, began to make excuse : the first the servant spoke to said, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it ; I pray thee have me excused.* 19. *And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them ; I pray thee have me excused.* 20. *And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.* If the first had had so important an affair to transact as the purchasing of a farm, or the second the buying of five yoke of oxen, or the third the marrying of a wife, and if these affairs had come upon them unexpectedly, the



very evening they had promised to spend at their rich neighbour's house, but especially if these affairs could not have been delayed without missing the opportunity of doing them, their excuses would have been reasonable. But none of all these was the case. The farm and the oxen were already purchased, and the wife was married; so that the seeing of the farm and the proving of the oxen were pieces of unseasonable curiosity, which might easily have been referred till next morning. And with respect to the new married man's pretending that he could not leave his wife for a few hours, it was such an excess of fondness as was perfectly ridiculous; not to mention that he ought to have thought of this when the invitation was sent him the preceding day. Wherefore, their refusing so late to come to their rich friend's supper on such trifling pretences, was the height of rudeness, in as much as it implied the greatest disrespect to their friend, and contempt of his entertainment. No wonder therefore that he was very angry when his servant returned and brought him their answer. 21. *So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.* The rich lord who made this feast, being of a generous disposition, determined that preparations so great should not be made in vain; and seeing those for whom they were first intended slighted the favour, he resolved that a great number still should be made happy with his supper, though they were of the poorer sort, nay, and diseased too; and the rather, that the persons of this class, upon whom he proposed to bestow his supper, had never partaken of such a meal before. He therefore ordered his servant to go as fast as he could into the streets and lanes of the city, where the poor used to be, and to bring them all in, however maimed, or halt, or blind, they might be. 22. *And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.* The supper being great, and the hall of entertainment spacious, all those whom the servant happened to find in the streets and lanes of the city, did not fill the tables. Wherefore, knowing that his lord's intention was to make as many happy with this feast as possible, he came and told him, there was still room. 23. *And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and \*compel them to come in, that*

\* Ver. 23. *Compel them to come in.*] *Αναγκασον* *ουκ* *αριστος* does not necessarily imply that any external violence was to be used with the beggars in the highways and hedges. A single servant only was sent out to them, who surely was not capable of forcing so great a multitude of beggars to come in, as was necessary to fill his lord's house. The proper meaning of the expression is, *use the most powerful persuasion with them*; and so it fitly denotes the great efficacy of the apostles preaching to the idolatrous Gentiles,



*that my house may be filled.* The generosity of this great lord was such, that he could not be easy till as many people were brought in to eat his supper as his house would hold ; that is, not the hall only, but all the apartments where tables could be placed. Wherefore, he ordered his servant to go even out of the city, to the highways and hedges leading into it, where beggars usually have their stations, and to use the most earnest intreaties with those who shewed any unwillingness, in order that his house might be filled with guests. He wanted his house so full, that if any of those who were first bidden should alter their mind and come, there might be no room to admit them ; for, to shew his displeasure with them on account of the high affront which they had put upon him, he declared in the hearing of all his servants, that not one of them should taste of his supper, though they came and desired it. 24. *For I say unto you, that \*none of those men which were bidden, shall taste of my supper.* The servant doing as he was ordered, brought the beggars in from the highways ; so there was a much more numerous company gathered than was at the first intended, and a great deal of joy occasioned. See the moral interpretation of this parable, as it was delivered a second time in the temple, Matt. xxii. § 116. To that interpretation nothing needs be added, except the explication of a circumstance mentioned here, which is not in the parable as it was then delivered, namely, the two distinct calls to the beggars, first to those in the streets and lanes of the city, and then to those in the highways and under the hedges leading into it. The former are supposed to be the Gentile profelytes, to whom the gospel was preached after it was rejected by the Jews. The latter are the idolatrous Gentiles, who had the gospel offered to them

tiles, whereby vast numbers of them were prevailed with to embrace the gospel. We have an undoubted instance of this use of the word *αναγκασω*, LXX. Prov. vii 31. *With her much fair speech, αναγκασε, she compelled him.* Nay, *παραβιαζω*, which is a stronger word still than *αναγκασω*, is used to denote powerful persuasion. For example, Luke xxiv. 29. *παραβιασαντες αυτον λεγοντες, μωοι, &c.* See also LXX. Gen. xix. 3. Acts xvi. 15. To conclude, force has no manner of influence to enlighten mens consciences ; so that though one should pretend to believe, and should actually practise a worship contrary to his opinion, it can never please God, being mere hypocrisy. Wherefore Augustin and others, who suppose that this passage of the parable justifies the use of external violence in matters of religion, are grossly mistaken.

[Ver. 24. *None of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.*] In the repetition of the parable, Matt. xxii. this circumstance is wanting. The thing signified by it is, that because the Jews rejected Jesus and his apostles, they were given over by God to a hardened and reprobate mind ; only the reader must remember, that not the condition of individuals, but the general state of the nation is here described ; in which view, the parabolical representation is perfectly just, notwithstanding many individual Jews believed on Jesus, and obtained eternal life.



them last of all, the proselytes not being in number sufficient to compose the church of God.

§ XCIII. *Self-denial is again inculcated; see § 71. The parables of the rash builder and warrior, and of salt that hath lost his savour. See § 26. Luke xiv. 25,—35.*

THE multitude now accompanied Jesus from place to place, with eager desire to have the Messiah's kingdom erected, proposing to find therein all manner of sensual pleasures. One day, therefore, as they were on the road with him, he thought fit to shew them their mistake plainly. Luke xiv. 25. *And there went great multitudes with him; and he turned and said unto them, 26. If any man come to me, and <sup>\*</sup> hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.* As all the hopes of temporal felicity under his reign, which his disciples entertained, were to be blasted, as he himself was to suffer a public ignominious death, and as they were to be exposed unto all manner of persecutions, he declared publicly to the multitude, that if they proposed to be his disciples, it was absolutely necessary that they should prefer his service to every thing in the world, and by their conduct shew that they hated father, and mother, and wife, and children, that is to say, loved the dearest objects of their affections less than him. Luke xiv. 27. *And whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple. See on Matth. x. 38. § 40.* To illustrate the necessity of their weighing deliberately, whether they were able and prepared to bear all the losses and persecutions which the profession of the gospel would expose them to, which indeed was the only term on which they could be his disciples, he desired them to consider how prudence would direct them to act in other cases of importance. 28. *For which of you intending to build a tower, (Le Clerc contends that the Greek word *πυργος* here has the signification of the Hebrew *migdol*, which denotes any great building whatever) sitteth not down first and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? 29. Lest haply after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, 30. Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish:* The most thoughtless person among you will not resolve on a matter of such importance

\* Ver. 26. *And hate not his father, &c.*] As in this, so in several other passages, the word *hated* signifies only an inferior degree of love. For example, Gen. xxix. 31. *When God saw that Leah was hated, i. e. less beloved,* as appears from the context, Deut. xxi. 15. *If a man have two wives, the one beloved, the other hated, i. e. less beloved.* Rom. ix. 13. *Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated, i. e. loved him less than Jacob.* Father, and mother, and other relations, were particularly mentioned by our Lord, because, as matters then stood, the profession of the gospel was apt to set a man at variance with his nearest relations.



tance as the building of a house, without previously calculating the expence ; because you know that the builder who begins without counting the cost, being obliged to leave off for want of money, exposes himself to the ridicule of all passengers, who look on the half finished edifice. In like manner, the king who declares war without comparing the number of his forces with that of his enemy, and considering whether the bravery of his troops, and the conduct of his generals, will be able to make up what he wants in numbers, is sure to be ingloriously defeated, unless he humbly sues for peace before it comes to an engagement. 31. *Or what king going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth, whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand ?* 32. *Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace.* 33. *So likewise, whosoever he be of you, that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.* Whosoever engages to be my disciple without counting the cost, and resolving to part with all that he hath, will certainly be disheartened by the unexpected difficulties which he shall meet with, and abandoning my service, will expose himself to great shame and loss. It would be very foolish to urge the letter of this precept strictly, and maintain that a man cannot be Christ's disciple, unless he throws all his goods into the sea, divorces his wife, and bids farewell to his children and relations. None more truly renounces all that he hath, than the man who preserves himself ready every moment to do so, and follows his business free and disentangled. Such a person will cheerfully part with life, and every thing dear in life, when called thereto. It was in this sense that the apostles understood their Master ; for though they are said to have forsaken all and followed him, they still retained the property of their goods, as is evident from the mention that is made of John's house, into which he took our Lord's mother after the crucifixion ; and from Peter and the other disciples plying their old trade of fishing with their own boat and nets, after their Master's resurrection. Besides, we find Peter paying the tribute in Capernaum, as an inhabitant of the town ; and it was in his house that our Lord resided when at Capernaum. Nevertheless, though the apostles thus retained the dominion and use of their property, they had truly forsaken all in the highest sense of their Master's precept, being ready at his call to leave their families, occupations, and possessions, as often and as long as he thought fit to employ them in the work of the gospel. Upon the whole, it appears that the renunciation and self-denial which Christ requires, does not consist in actually parting with all before he calls us to do so, but in being disposed to part with all, that when he calls we may do it. See on Matt. xix. 29. § 105. To conclude, Jesus told his apostles,



bles, that this self-denial was peculiarly necessary for them, because it was the spiritual salt that would preserve them from apostasy and others from corruption, as it would not only enervate the temptations to which they might be exposed, but its beauty appearing with great lustre in their behaviour, would allure others to become disciples and true subjects of his kingdom. Luke xiv. 34. *Salt is good, but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned?* 35. *It is neither fit for the land nor yet for the dungbill, but men cast it out.* See on Matt. v. 13. § 26. *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.* See on Matt. xi. 15. § 42.

§. XCIV. *The parables of the lost sheep, (§ 74.) lost money, and lost son.* Luke xv. 1,—32.

To do good unto all sorts of men, was the employment and highest pleasure of the Son of God. Accordingly when the tax-gatherers and sinners came to hear him, he rejoiced at the opportunity, received them courteously, and though they were persons of infamous characters, went with them to their houses, that he might scatter the seeds of wisdom among them, and if possible bring them to a right temper of mind. Luke xv. 1. *Then drew near unto him all the publicans, some of all the different classes of publicans, (see on Mark ii. 14. § 34.) and sinners, for to hear him.* 2. *And the Pharisees and Scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.* The Pharisees, whose pride was intolerable, thinking this behaviour inconsistent with the sanctity of a prophet, were much displeased with him for it, and murmured at his charitable condescension, which ought rather to have given them joy. Wherefore, that he might justify his conversing familiarly with sinners in order to reform them, he spake the parable of the lost sheep, which he had delivered once before, (§ 74.) also the parables of the lost money, and lost son. From mens conduct in the common affairs of life, described in the parables of the lost sheep and lost money, Christ proved it to be the general sense of mankind, that every sinner should be sought after by the teachers of religion. For as men are so moved with the loss of any part of their property, that they seem to neglect what remains, whilst they are employed in recovering that which happens to be missing; and when they have found it, are so overjoyed, that they cannot contain themselves, but calling their friends to whom they had given an account of their misfortune, they tell them the good news, that they may partake in their joy; so the servants of God should labour with the greatest solicitude, to recover whatever part of his property is lost, his reasonable creatures, who having strayed from him, are in danger of perishing. And they have powerful encouragement to do so, as the reformation of a single sinner occasions more joy in heaven, than the steadfastness of ninety-nine just persons who



who need no repentance, that is to say *conversion*, for so the word signifies in this passage, and should be translated; unless by the *just persons* mentioned, we understand the glorified saints. By this circumstance likewise he insinuated, that the Pharisees who pretended to more holiness than others, instead of repining at his conversing with and instructing sinners, ought to have imitated the example of the heavenly beings, and to have rejoiced to find these men delighted with his company and discourses, who enjoined them a much stricter life than they hitherto had been used to, in as much as this was a certain token of their repentance, and seemed to promise a speedy thorough reformation. The drift of both parables is to shew, that the conversion of sinners is a thing highly acceptable to God, and consequently that whatever is necessary thereto is so far from being inconsistent with goodness, that it is the very perfection and excellency of it, Dan. xii. 3. Luke xv. 3. *And he spake this parable unto them, saying, 4. What man of you having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost until he find it? 5. And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. 6. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost\*. 7. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance.* The design of this parable being to represent divine things by images taken from the manners of men, what is here said of God and of the angels, must be understood suitably to the nature of human passions, which are much more sensibly affected with the obtaining of what they have long vehemently desired, or with the gaining of that which was looked upon as lost, than they are with the continuance of goods long enjoyed. 8. *Either what poor woman having ten pieces of silver (ten drachmas) if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it? 9. And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbours together, to whom she had told her loss, saying, Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I had lost. 10. Likewise I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.* ἄγγελοι γὰρ ὑμῶν ἠγαλλῶνται: *The angels of God shall rejoice:* a form of expression frequent in the New Testament. See Luke iv. 7. and ver. 18. of this chapter. This part of the parable is finely imagined. The angels, though high in nature and perfect in blessedness, are represented as bearing a friendly regard to their kindred essences on earth,

\* Ver 6.] When this parable was delivered formerly, Jesus added, Mar. xviij. 14. "Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish." See § 74.



earth, and as having exact knowledge of many things done here below.

He spake next the parable of the lost son, which of all his parables is the most delightful, not only as it inforces a doctrine incomparably joyous, but because it abounds with the tender passions, is finely painted with the most beautiful images, and is to the mind what a charming diversified landscape is to the eye. Luke xv. 11. *And he said, A certain man had two sons : 12. And the younger of them, being impatient of the restraint he lay under at home, came and said to his father, \* Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.* The indulgent parent listened to his son's desire, made an estimate of his estate, (see ver. 29.) and gave him his portion, perhaps because he pretended that he was going to follow business. The younger son therefore having thus gotten possession of his fortune, lost no time. He gathered all together ; and that he might be wholly from under the eye of his parent, who was a person of great piety, and freed from the restraints of religion, he went into a far country among heathens, (see verse 15.) where was neither the knowledge nor worship of God, chusing such companions as were most agreeable to his vicious inclinations. Here he wallowed in unbounded riotousness and debauchery. But the ferment produced in his body by riotous living, soon clouded his understanding, and confounded any little sense he was possessed of ; his mind was stimulated by mad desires, which pushed him from one extravagancy to another, till he quickly spent all. Luke xv. 13. *And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there, instead of following business, he wasted his substance with riotous living : whoring, drinking, and all manner of debauchery.* These circumstances, joined with the manner in which his father received him at his return home, are admirably contrived to shew the immense goodness and incomparable indulgence of God. No crime is so great or so highly aggravated, that he will not forgive it, if the sinner repents. 14. *And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land, and he began to be in want.* Having spent all to keep himself from starving in the famine, he submitted to the most disgraceful work that a Jew could be employed in, he hired himself to feed swine ; he, who the other day had been so remarkable for his luxury, extravagance, and foppish delicacy. Such are the direful consequences of vice ! 15. *And he went and joined*

\* Ver. 11. *Father, give me the portion of goods, &c.*] What Ambrose says somewhere, is very fit to illustrate the character of this foolish youth : *Habet pueritia innocentiam, senectus prudentiam, juvenus verecundiam delinquendi : adolescentia sola est invalida viribus, infirma consiliis, vitio calens, fastidiosa monitoribus, illecebrosa deliciis."*



ed himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. But the wages he earned by this ignominious service, were not sufficient, in a time of so great scarcity, to purchase him as much food of any kind, as would satisfy the cravings of his appetite. It seems his master gave him wages without victuals \*. 16. *And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat ; and no man gave unto him.* Being half-starved therefore, he often looked on the swine with envy, as they were feeding, and wished that he could have filled his belly with the husks which they devoured ; a circumstance which beautifully shews the extremity of his misery. Distress so great brought him at length to think ; for one day as he was sitting hungry and faint among the gluttonous animals, he reflected on the happiness of servants in his father's family, who had more meat than they could use, whilst he was ready to die with famine in a strange country. 17. *And when he came to himself he said, How many hired servants of my fathers have bread enough, and to spare, and I perish with hunger !* The consideration of these things made him willing to return home ; but that he might be received again, he resolved with himself to go in all humility, and confess his crimes to his father, acknowledging that he was utterly unworthy to be owned as a son, and praying that he might be taken into the house only as a hired servant. 18. *I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee.* He meant that God was injured in the person of his earthly father. And certainly nature itself teaches this, that whoever is insolent or disrespectful to his parents, rebels against God, who by making them the instruments of communicating life to their children, has imparted to them some of his own paternal honour. He resolved to say likewise, 19. *And am no more worthy to be called thy son : make me as one of thy hired servants.* Having the idea of his undutiful behaviour strongly impressed on his mind, he was sensible that he had no title to be treated at home as a son. At the same time, he knew that it never would be well with him till he

\* That his master gave him wages without victuals, appears from verse 16. *And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat, and no man gave unto him.* In the original it is *καὶ οὐδὲς αὐτῷ ἐδωκεν*, for no man gave him meat. So the clause should be supplied and translated, the words *Πάσας* or *ἀγροῦ* being understood, as is plain from this, that the clause contains a reason for his desiring to fill his belly with the husks, and not for his abstaining from them. His abstaining from the husks was owing to their being the food of beasts, and not to his wanting permission to eat them ; for this debauched youth cannot be supposed to have possessed such a principle of honesty, that he would rather die with famine, than without his master's leave take so small a matter as a husk, which the herd seems to have had in plenty.



He was in his father's family again ; so with joy he entertained the thought of occupying the meanest station in it. Thus while the liberality of the great Parent of men makes them wantonly run away from his family, the miseries which they involve themselves in, often constrain them to return. By the natural consequences of sin, God sometimes makes sinners to feel that there is no felicity to be found any where but in himself\*. And now the young man having taken the resolution of returning to his father, put it immediately in execution ; he set out just as he was, bare-footed and all in rags. Luke xv. 20. *And he arose and came to his father.* But when he came within sight of home, his nakedness, and the consciousness of his folly, made him ashamed to go in. He skulked about therefore, keeping at a distance, till his father happening to spy him, knew him, had compassion, ran though old and infirm, fell on his neck and kissed him. *But when he was yet a great way off, (ἐτι δε αὐτῷ μακρὰν ἀπέχοντες, but he keeping yet at a distance) his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck and kissed him.* The perturbation which the aged parent was in with ecstasy of joy, hindered him from speaking ; to the poor, ragged, meagre creature, locked in his arms, began and made his acknowledgments, with a tone of voice expressive of the deepest contrition. 21. *And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.* But the father grieved to see his son in that miserable plight, interrupted him, ordering his servants some to bring out the best robe immediately, and a ring, and shoes, that he might be clothed in a manner becoming his son, and others to go kill the fatted calf, that they might eat and be merry. 22. *But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet.* 23. *And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat and be merry.* 24. *For this my son was dead, and is alive again ; he was lost, and is found.* We looked upon him as utterly lost, but lo he is come back again beyond all expectation in safety. *And they began to be merry :* they sat down to the feast, rejoicing exceedingly at the happy occasion of it.

And now while every one in the family heartily joined in expressing their joy on account of the safe return of the second son, the elder brother happening to come from the field, heard the noise of singing and dancing within ; wherefore, calling out one of the servants, he asked what these things meant ? The servant replied, that his brother was unexpectedly come, and that his father,

\* Augustine has well expressed this grand truth in the following address : " Væ ergo animæ audaci, quæ sperat si a te recessisset, se aliquid melius habituram. Versa & reversa, in tergum & in latera & in ventrem, & dura sunt omnia, & tu solus requies."



ther, being very glad to see him, had killed the fatted calf, and was making a feast, because he had received him safe and sound. Luke xv. 25. *Now his elder son was in the field ; and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing. 26. And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant ? 27. And he said unto him, Thy brother is come, and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound.* When the elder brother heard this, he fell into a violent passion, and would not go in ; the servant therefore came and told his father of it. The father rising up, went out, and with incomparable goodness intreated his son to come and partake in the general joy of the family, on account of his brother's return. Luke xv. 28. *And he was angry, and would not go in ; therefore came his father out and entreated him.* But the kindness and respect which his father shewed him on this occasion, did not soften him in the least. He stubbornly persisted in his anger, and answered the affectionate speeches of his parent, with nothing but loud and haughty accusations of his conduct. 29. *And he answering, said to his father, \* Lo these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment, and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends.* This branch of the parable is finely contrived to express the high opinion which the Pharisees, here represented by the elder brother, entertained of their own righteousness and merit. 30. *But as soon as this thy son :* the ungracious youth disdained to call him his brother, and at the same time insolently insinuated, that his father seemed to despise all his other children, and to reckon this prodigal only *his son* ; as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf. The father meekly replied, Son, as thou hast never been absent from me for any considerable time, I could not in this manner express the affection which I entertain for thee. Besides, thou hast not been altogether without a reward of thy service, for thou hast lived in my family, and hast had the command of my fortune, as far as thine exigencies, or even thy pleasures required. 31. *And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.* By calling him *son*, after the insolent speech he had made, the father insinuated that he acknowledged him likewise for his son, and that neither the undutifulness of the one or of the other of his children, could extinguish his affection, or cancel the relation subsist-

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\* Ver. 29. *Lo, these many years do I serve thee, &c.]* This is the young man's own testimony concerning his dutifulness, in which respect he fully represented the self righteous Pharisees. It is his testimony also concerning the returns which his father had made to him for his services. Nevertheless, his behaviour on this occasion, as well as that of his father, seems to give him the lie in both particulars.



ing between them. 32. *It was meet that we should make merry and be glad*: Both reason and natural affection justify me in calling the whole family to rejoice on the present occasion. For as thy brother is returned to us sensible of his folly, and determined to lead a better course of life, his arrival is like his reviving after death; at least it is his being found after he was really lost. For which reason, our joy ought to bear a proportion to the greatness of this occasion. *For this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.* Though he has devoured my living with harlots, he is thy brother as well as my son; wherefore, thou shouldst not be angry, because he hath repented and is returned, after we thought him irrecoverably lost. Thus the goodness with which the father bore the surly peevishness of his elder son was little inferior to the mercy shewed in the pardon that he granted to the younger.

Jesus having thus set before them the affectionate behaviour of an earthly parent towards his undutiful child, left every one to judge whether such weak and wicked creatures can love their offspring with more true tenderness, than the great Father Almighty does his, or shew them more indulgence for their benefit. In this inimitable composition, the amazing mercy of God is painted with captivating beauty; and in all the three parables, the joys occasioned among heavenly beings by the conversion of a single sinner, are represented; joys even to God himself, than which a nobler and sweeter thought never entered into the mind of rational creatures. Thus high do men stand in the estimation of God; for which cause they should not cast themselves away in that trifling manner wherein multitudes destroy themselves; neither should any think the salvation of others a small matter, as some who are intrusted with their recovery seem to do. Had the Pharisees understood the parable, how criminal must they have appeared in their own eyes, when they saw themselves truly described in the character of the elder son, who was angry that his brother had repented! Withal, how bitter must their remorse have been, when they found themselves not only repining at that which gave joy to God, the conversion of sinners, but excessively displeased with the methods of his procedure in this matter, and maliciously opposing them! If these parables had been omitted by Luke as they have been by the other three historians, the world would certainly have sustained an unspeakable loss.

§ XCV. *The parable of the steward who wasted his lord's goods.*  
 Luke xvi. 1,—13.

THE maliciousness of the Pharisees, and the obstinacy with which they opposed every thing that was good, had by this time made a deep impression upon our Lord's spirit. Wherefore, he did not content himself barely with justifying his receiving sinners



ners in order to reform them; but while the Scribes and Pharisees were present, he turned to his disciples, and spake the parable of the crafty steward, whom he proposed as an example of the dextrous improvement which worldly men make of such opportunities and advantages as fall in their way, for advancing their interest. By this parable, Jesus designed to excite his disciples to improve, in like manner, the advantages they might enjoy for advancing their own spiritual welfare, and particularly to spend both their time and money in promoting the conversion of sinners, which of all the offices in their power, was the most acceptable to God, and the most beneficial to man. Luke xvi. 1. *And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man which had a steward: to whom the care of his family, and all his domestic concerns were committed; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods:* Some of the family who had a real concern for their lord's interest, observing the steward to be both profuse in his distributions, and negligent in taking care of the provisions of the family, thought fit to inform their lord that he was wasting his goods. 2. *And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? Give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward.* His lord calling him, told him what was laid to his charge; and as he did not pretend to deny the accusation, he ordered him to give in his accounts, because he was determined he should be no longer steward. The steward having heard his doom pronounced, began to consider with himself how he should be supported when he was discarded. He was of a disposition so prodigal, that he had laid up nothing; he was incapable of bodily labour, being old perhaps, or not accustomed to it; and as for begging, considering his temper and station, it was what he could not submit to. 3. *Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me my stewardship: I cannot dig, to beg I am ashamed.* While he was thus weighing matters, a lucky thought came into his mind: he was not yet turned out of his office; he therefore resolved to use his power in such a manner as to make himself friends, who would succour him in his need. Luke xvi. 4. *I am resolved what to do, that when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.* Anciently stewards, besides taking care of their master's domestic affairs, gave leases of their lands, and settled the rent which each tenant was to pay. Accordingly, the steward in the parable made use of this branch of his power, to purchase the good-will and friendship of his lord's tenants. Having racked the rents in the leases which he had lately given, he now determined that the tenants should have their possessions on the same terms as formerly; a resolution which as it was prudent for the steward, might in the issue be not unprofitable to his lord.



lord. Wherefore, calling the tenants, he intimated his purpose to them. And whereas one by his bargain had bound himself to pay yearly for his possession an hundred baths of oil, each bath equal to seven gallons, four pints and an half, English measure, he let him have it at fifty; and whereas another was to pay an hundred homers of wheat yearly, each homer being equal to eight bushels and an half, Winchester measure, he gave him his lease at eighty, and altered the obligatory writings accordingly \*. 5. *So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord?* 6. *And he said, An hundred measures* (*παρους*, from the Hebrew *בַּת*, which in the Old Testament is translated *baths*) *of oil.* *And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty.* 7. *Then said he to another, And how much owest thou?* *And he said, An hundred measures* (*χορὴς* is the *חֹמֶשׁ*, or homer of the Hebrews) *of wheat.* *And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore.* 8. *And the lord* (*ὁ κυριος* supplies *unto*, *his lord*) *commended:* for it is Jesus, and not the evangelist who speaks this, as is plain both from the structure of the parable itself, and from the application which Jesus makes of it, ver. 9. “And I say unto you, Make to yourselves,” &c. As the lord commended his steward, so I desire you my disciples, to make a prudent use of uncertain riches. “And his lord commended” *the unjust steward, because he had done wisely; for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.* The epithet of *unjust*, here given to the steward, does not necessarily imply that in his proceedings with the debtors he acted fraudulently. It may have been given him on account of his former bad management. Yet if the reader is of a different opinion, it must be observed that our Lord, by mentioning the commendation which the rich man bestowed upon his steward, does not mean to approve of the man's knavery, which is sufficiently branded by the epithet of *unjust*, here given him by Jesus himself; neither was it designed to give countenance to the fraud of any person on any occasion whatsoever, nor to the conduct of those who are liberal out of other peoples goods. The wisdom of the steward in making himself friends only is commended by his lord, and proposed by Jesus as worthy the imitation

\* This interpretation of the parable may be gathered not only from the nature of the thing, but from the proper sense of the words *χρεωφειλῆς* and *γραμμά*, the one signifying any kind of debtor, and among the rest a *tenant*, and the other any kind of obligatory writing, and among the rest a *lease*. Besides, in this light the favour that was done to the tenants was substantial, and laid them under lasting obligations; whereas, according to the common interpretation, the steward could not propose to reap as much benefit from any requital the debtors would make him for the sums forgiven them, as these sums were worth to himself, and therefore he might rather have exacted them, and put them into his own pocket.



tion of his disciples, not the method by which he made them, if it was fraudulent. Or if that is commended, it is commended only as wise in relation to the plan he had laid down, there being nothing more common among men than to commend the ingenuity shewed in a fraud, while they condemn the fraud itself. The calumnies therefore which Julian and Porphyry have thrown out against our Lord, on account of this parable, are altogether groundless; its true scope being to teach those who have their views extended to eternity, to be as active and prudent in their schemes for the life to come, as the children of this world are for the present; and particularly to do all the good offices to others in their power, a duty highly incumbent on those whose business it is to reclaim sinners, not only because sinners are in themselves fit objects of charity as well as saints, but because charitable offices done them may have a happy tendency to promote their conversion. That this was the lesson Jesus designed to inculcate by the parable of the crafty steward, is evident from the application of it. Luke xvi. 9. *And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the \* mammon of unrighteousness; that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.* Our Lord's advice is worthy of the most serious attention; the best use we can make of our riches being to employ them in promoting the salvation of others. For if we use our abilities and interests in bringing sinners to God, if we spend our money in this excellent service, we shall conciliate the good will of all heavenly beings, who greatly rejoice at the conversion of sinners, as was represented in the preceding parables; so that with open arms they will receive us into the mansions of felicity. And therefore while self-seekers shall have their possessions, and honours, and estates, torn from them with the utmost reluctance at death, they who have devoted themselves, and all that they had, to the service of God, shall find their consumed estates to be greatly increased, and their neglected honours abundantly repaired, in the love and friendship of the inhabitants of heaven, and in the happiness of the world to come, and shall rejoice in having disposed of their wealth to such an advantage. Our Lord proceeded in the application of the parable: If, said he, you make that use of your riches which I have been recommending, you shall be received into those everlasting habitations where all the friends of goodness dwell, because by your fidelity in managing the small trust of temporal advantages committed to your care, you do shew that you are worthy and capable of the much greater trust

\* Ver. 9. *Mammon of unrighteousness.*] By the mammon of unrighteousness (*μαρμωνα της αδικιας*) he does not mean unrighteous or ill gotten riches, but false and uncertain riches, as is plain from verse 11. where *μαρμωνα αδικου*, as the critics observe, is not opposed to *δικαιου*, but to *αληθινου*.



trust of heavenly employments and enjoyments. 10. *He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much*: Whereas, if you do not use your riches for the glory of God, and the good of men, you shall be banished for ever from the abodes of the blessed, because by behaving unfaithfully in the small trust committed to you now, you render yourselves both unworthy and incapable of a share in the everlasting inheritance; *and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much*. 11. *If therefore ye have not been faithful in \* the unrighteous mammon, † who will commit to your trust the true riches?* If ye have not been faithful in the use of your riches and power, very properly called the false mammon, because they always deceive those who confide in them as the sovereign good, who will commit to your trust the true mammon? the joys of heaven, called mammon far more properly than the pleasures of the world, because they may be securely confided in as a never-failing source of happiness. Luke xvi. 12. *And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?* Here, as in many of our Lord's discourses, the expression is so simple, and the sense so profound, that we need not wonder at its being overlooked. The translation has the word *man* supplied without reason; for it is not man, but God who is intended, to whom the riches and other advantages in our possession do properly belong, who has committed them to us only as stewards, to be laid out for the good of his family, and who may every moment call us to give an account of our management. The words *that which is your own* do not signify that which is already our own, as Dr Clarke observes, but that which is to be so; that which, when it is conferred upon us, shall be wholly in our power, and perpetually in our possession; shall be so fully our own, that we shall never be called to an account for the management of it. Our Lord's meaning therefore was, Since you have dared to be unfaithful in that which was only a trust committed to you by God for a short time, and of which you knew you were to give him an account, it is evident that you are not fit to be intrusted by him with the riches of heaven; these being treasures which, if he bestowed them on you, would be so fully your own, that you should

\* Ver. 11. *The unrighteous mammon*] So the clause runs in our translation, but the words in this construction signify *the false, the deceitful mammon*.

† Ibid. *Who will commit to your trust the true riches?*] The word *riches* is substituted by our translators instead of *mammon*, which was the word Christ intended, and which for that reason should find its place in the translation of this verse. *Mammon* coming from the Hebrew מַמְּוֹן signifies *whatever one is apt to confide in*; and because men put their trust generally in external advantages, such as riches, authority, honour, power, knowledge, the word *mammon* is used to denote every thing of that kind, and particularly *riches* by way of eminence.



should have them perpetually in your possession, and never be called to an account for your management of them. 13. *No servant can serve two masters ; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.* Beware of indulging even the least degree of covetousness, for it is absolutely inconsistent with piety, insomuch that a man may as well undertake, at one and the same time, to serve two masters of contrary dispositions and opposite interests, as pretend to please God whilst he is anxiously pursuing the world for its own sake. See on Matt. vi. 24. § 26.

In this manner did Jesus recommend the true use of riches, power, knowledge, and the other advantages of the present life, from the consideration that they are not our own, but God's ; that they are only committed to us as stewards, to be employed for the honour of God and the good of men ; that we are accountable to the proprietor for the use we make of them, who will reward or punish us accordingly ; and that every degree of covetousness is such a serving of mammon as is really idolatry, and altogether inconsistent with the duty we owe to God.

§ XCVI. *The Pharisees are rebuked. The parable of the rich man and the beggar.* Luke xvi. 14,—31.

LUKE xvi. 14. *And the Pharisees also who were covetous, heard all these things, viz. concerning the true use of riches, and the impossibility of mens serving God and mammon at the same time : and \* they derided him, as a visionary who despised the pleasures of life for no other reason but because he could not procure them.* These men therefore having shewed a complication of the very worst dispositions, deserved a sharp rebuke, such as our Lord gave them in the parable of the rich man and the beggar, after having exposed those parts of their character which were most odious in the sight of God, and the roots from whence their other wickedness sprang, their hypocrisy, and their voluptuousness. In speaking of their hypocrisy, he told them that they made specious pretensions indeed to extraordinary sanctity, by shunning the company of sinners before the world, while in private they neither scrupled to have society with them, nor to join with them in their wickedness. Luke xvi. 15. *And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men : by your care of external appearances, you seldom fail to acquire a great reputation for sanctity, but God knoweth your hearts ; you cannot justify yourselves before God, who knows you to be very wicked*

\* Ver. 14. *They derided him.*] The original word is very emphatical, *ὑπεφρονέοντο*, they mocked him, by a scornful motion of the mouth and nose, as well as by what they spake to him.



wicked persons. Wherefore, though ye may have covered the foulness of your crimes with the painted cloke of hypocrisy, and by going about thus adorned, have cheated those who look no farther than the outside, into an high admiration of you; and it may be, are inwardly blessing yourselves for having the address to make gross sensuality and a reputation for sanctity, compatible: this is the height of folly. Ye cannot screen yourselves from the detection of God, whose eye penetrates through every covering, and who judges of things, not by their appearances, but according to truth; by which means, it comes to pass, that he often abhors both men and things that are held in the highest estimation; *for that which is highly esteemed amongst men, is abomination in the sight of God.* And with respect to his conduct, which they blamed so much, he observed to them, that the law and the prophets, the dispensation which made a distinction between men, accounting some clean and others unclean, continued till John came; and that from the commencement of his ministry, the kingdom of heaven, or gospel-dispensation, was preached, which admitted all persons upon repentance without distinction. 16. *The law and the prophets were until John; since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it:* as the gospel-dispensation is begun, you cannot justly find fault with me for going into the company of tax-gatherers and sinners, seeing I do it purely to bring about their conversion. Yet lest they might have imagined, that in speaking thus he lessened the authority of the law, by which the distinction between things clean and unclean had been established, he added, 17. *And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than for one tittle of the law to fail:* till the law is abrogated, the least of its precepts cannot be neglected. He spake next concerning their love of pleasure. These hypocrites, while they feigned an high veneration for the law by their exact observation of lesser duties, violated on many occasions its greatest and most sacred precepts; for example, they defiled themselves with the pollutions of lust, though they were so scrupulous of touching things unclean, that they would not go into the company of publicans, lest they might have been polluted by them. Nor was this an accusation without foundation, for their lust discovered itself by their frequent divorces; they put away their wives as often as they took any disgust at them or liked other women better. This, I suppose, was Christ's meaning, when, in vindication of his keeping company with publicans, he said to the Pharisees, Luke xvi. 18. *Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marieth another, committeth adultery; and whosoever marieth her that is put away from her husband, committeth adultery:* alluding to their known and frequent practice of divorce, which plainly shewed the impurity of their minds.

These



These reasonings were clear and unanswerable ; but the Pharisees, stupified with the intoxication of sensual pleasures, were deaf to every argument, how cogent soever, if it was levelled against their lusts. As an illustration therefore, and confirmation of his assertion, ver. 15. and that he might rouse them out of their lethargy, he made the thunder of the divine judgments to sound in their ears, by the parable of the rich man and the beggar. Luke xvi. 19. *There was a certain rich man which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day.* This rich man lived in the greatest abundance of all things necessary to pleasure ; for he took care to have his vanity gratified in the finery and delicacy of his dress, and his palate delighted with the most exquisite meats, which nature assisted by art could furnish ; he made a feast every day, both to cheer himself and to entertain his friends. In the mean time, at this man's gate there was laid daily a certain beggar, named Lazarus, so diseased and decrepit, that he was not able to walk, stand, or sit ; so poor, that he was glad of the crumbs that fell from his table ; and so naked, that the ulcers of which his body was full, lay uncovered and exposed to the weather, for the dogs came and licked them. 20. *And there was a certain beggar, named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate full of sores,* 21. *And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table ; moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores.* In this manner did Lazarus drag out an afflicted life, pining away with hunger, and cold, and painful disease ; while the great man within spent every day in the highest luxury of dress and table ; so that, according to the opinion of the world, Lazarus was as remarkable an instance of the greatest misery, as the other was of the most consummate felicity. 22. *And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom ; the rich man also died and was buried.* It happened that this rich man and beggar died much about the same time, but with this difference, that the approach of death was very terrible to the one, whereas the other, weary of life, descried the goal with inexpressible joy. The rich man indeed was honoured with a pompous funeral, while the beggar was thrown into the dust in a manner suitable to the obscurity of his life. But behold, from that time forth things were utterly reversed ; the beggar, being a good man, was wafted by guardian angels through the unknown regions, and laid in Abraham's bosom ; whereas the man that was in high life, having always pleased himself with the thought that there would be no future state, was amazed beyond what can be told, when he found himself plunged in the torments of hell. 23. *And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and \* seeth Abraham afar off,*

\* Ver. 23. *Seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.*] Because the opinions as well as the language of the Greeks had by this time made their way



*off, and Lazarus in his bosom.* The stings of his conscience were multiplied, and he was racked with envy, when lifting up his eyes he beheld the seats of the blessed at a distance ; for the first object that he saw was Lazarus, the beggar, who had been so often laid naked and hungry at his gate, sitting next to Abraham in the chief place of felicity. This passage Erasmus paraphrases as follows : “ Sublatis tandem oculis conspexit Abrahamum eminens, agnovit et Lazarum illum ante spectum, in sinu illius summo quiete solatioque fruentem, in mollissimo complexu sanctissimi Patris.” Luke xvi. 24. *And he cried, and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue ; for I am tormented in this flame.* Being in an agony of pain by reason of the flames, he cried to Abraham to take pity on his son, and send Lazarus to give him if it was but the very least degree of relief, by dipping the tip of his finger in water to cool his tongue, for his torment was intolerable. Abraham might have replied, Thou art not my son, I disown thee ; what is become of thy purple and fine linen, thy perfumes, thy feasting, thy dancings ? where are thy delicious wines, now that thou art so earnestly begging a drop of water to cool thy tongue ? Instead of thy stately palace, thou art shut up in hell ; instead of pleasure, thou art filled with pain ; instead of music and mirth, nothing is heard but wailing and gnashing of teeth. No : such speeches, however just, would not have been suitable to the humanity of blessed Abraham ; for which

way into Judea, some imagine that our Lord had their fictions about the abodes of departed souls in his eye, when he formed this parable. But the argument is not conclusive. At the same time it must be acknowledged, that his descriptions of those things are not drawn from the writings of the Old Testament, but have a remarkable affinity to the descriptions which the Grecian poets have given of them. They, as well as our Lord, represent the abodes of the blessed as lying contiguous to the region of the damned, and separated only by a great impassable river or deep gulph, in such a sort that the ghosts could talk with one another from its opposite banks. In the parable, souls whose bodies were buried, know each other, and converse together, as if they had been embodied. In like manner, the Pagans introduce departed souls talking together, and represent them as having pains and pleasures analogous to what we feel in this life ; it seems they thought the shades of the dead had an exact resemblance to their bodies. The parable says, the souls of wicked men are tormented in flames ; the Grecian mythologists tell us they lie in Pyriphlegethon, which is a river of fire, where they suffer the same torments they would have suffered while alive, had their bodies been burnt. If from these resemblances it is thought that the parable is formed on the Grecian mythology, it will not at all follow that our Lord approved of what the common people thought or spake concerning those matters, agreeably to the notions and language of the Greeks. In parabolical discourses, provided the doctrines inculcated are strictly true, the terms in which they are inculcated may be such as are most familiar to the ears of the vulgar, and the images made use of, such as they are best acquainted with.



which reason, that good patriarch did not so much as put this wicked man in mind of his ill-spent life ; only being to justify God for having made so sudden and so remarkable a change in his state, he called him his son, and spake of his past debauched way of living in the softest manner possible, shewing us the sweet disposition of the blessed in heaven. 25. *But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things ; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.* He bade him consider, that in his life-time he despised heaven, valuing and seeking nothing but the pleasures of sense ; which having enjoyed in the greatest perfection, he could not think it hard, if by the sentence of God, in the open violation of whose laws he had lived, he was deprived of that which he had always despised. On the other hand, Lazarus had borne the miseries of life with patience, trusted in God, and looked forward to a better state ; wherefore, said he, his afflictions are all brought to an end, and he is refreshed with eternal joys, which know neither hunger, nor cold, nor pain. And as for sending Lazarus to him to mitigate his misery, he told him that was impossible, how much soever both Lazarus and he might pity him, because his state was unalterably fixed. Luke xvi, 26. *And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulph fixed ; so that they which would pass from hence to you, cannot ; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.* And now finding that nothing could be done for himself, he began to be in pain about his relations. He had five brethren alive, who it seems were rioting in luxury, and entertaining the opinion concerning a future state which had proved so fatal to him. Therefore, that he might prevent the ruin of his brethren, and if possible ease himself of the painful reflections which he felt for having been instrumental in corrupting them, he intreated Abraham to send Lazarus unto them in hopes it would reclaim them. By making this request, the man acknowledged both his own wickedness, and the principle from which it proceeded ; he had disbelieved the immortality of the soul, had wallowed in the pleasures of sense, and, by his example at least, had seduced his brethren into the same destructive courses. 27. *Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house :* 28. *For I have five brethren, that he may testify unto them the certain truth of the immortality of the soul, and of a future state of rewards and punishments, lest they also come into this place of torment.* Abraham replied, They have the books of Moses and the prophets, from which they may learn the certainty of these things, if they will be at the pains to read them. 29. *Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets ; let them bear them.* He answered, that the writings of Moses and the prophets had proved ineffectual to himself, and



be feared would be so to his brethren ; but that they would certainly change their opinions, and reform their lives, if one appeared to them actually from the dead. 30. *And he said, Nay, father Abraham, but \* if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.* Abraham told him he was much mistaken, assuring him that the evil dispositions which hindered men from believing the evidences of a future state, contained in the writings of Moses and the prophets, would likewise hinder them from believing the testimony of a messenger from the dead. 31. *And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.*

By this parable we are taught several important lessons : as,  
 1. That one may be great and renowned, and highly esteemed among men, who is entirely obscure and vulgar in the eyes of God, nay, and an abomination unto him, ver. 15. For what can be greater or better in the eyes of men, than to live adorned with all the splendour of wealth, luxury, and honours ? and what more disgraceful in the sight of God than to be polluted with sin, and fit only for the flames of hell ? On the other hand, the parable teaches that some who appear mean and despicable in the eyes of their fellows, are men of great worth, and highly beloved of God. Wealth, therefore, and power, and grandeur, are not to be coveted, neither is poverty to be dreaded, since that honour which is the chief charm of the one, and that reproach which is the bitterest sting of the other, are altogether without foundation.

2. This parable teaches us, that the souls of men are immortal, that they subsist in a separate state after the dissolution of the body, and that they are rewarded or punished according to their actions in this life ; doctrines very necessary to be asserted in those days, when it was fashionable to believe the mortality of the soul, and to argue in defence of that pernicious error. Farther, it teaches us, that the miseries of the poor who have lived religiously, and the happiness of the rich who have lived wickedly, do end with this life ; and that the several stations in which they have lived, together with the past occurrences and actions of their lives, are distinctly remembered and reflected upon by them ; see ver. 25. And that the remembrance of past pains and pleasures will

\* Ver. 30. *If one went unto them from the dead, &c.* ] It is uncertain whether the rich man, by “ one from the dead,” meant an apparition or resurrection. His words are capable of either sense, yet the quality of the persons to whom this messenger was to be sent, makes it more probable that he meant an apparition. For without doubt the character Josephus gives us of the Jews in high life, viz. that they were generally Sadducees, was applicable to those brethren ; so that disbelieving the existence of souls in a separate state, nothing more was necessary, in the opinion of their brother, to convince them, but that they should see a real apparition.



will not lessen, but rather increase the joys of the one, and the sorrows of the other; and consequently that we make a very false judgment of one another's condition, when we think any man happy because he is rich, or any man miserable because he is poor.

3. From this parable we learn, that men shall be punished hereafter, for entertaining principles inconsistent with morality and religion, for their worldly-mindedness and heedlessness with respect to matters of religion, for being immersed in pleasure, and for not using their riches aright, as well as for crimes of a grosser nature; wherefore it affords a fit caution to all the great and rich, to beware of the rocks on which they are most apt to split. This great man who fell into the flames of hell, is not charged with murder, adultery, injustice, oppression, or lying; he is not even charged with being remarkably uncharitable. Lazarus lay commonly at his gate; and though he received evil things, being treated by every one in the family as a beggar, he got his maintenance there, such as it was, otherwise he would not have been laid there daily, nor would the rich man have desired Abraham to send him rather than any other of the blessed, with a drop of water to cool his tongue, had he not imagined that gratitude would prompt him to undertake the office with cheerfulness. The rich man's sin, therefore, was his living in luxury and pleasure, which made him on the one hand neglect religion, for cultivating which he had the best opportunities, and on the other cherish atheistical principles, particularly such as flow from believing the mortality of the soul. If so, all who resemble this person in his character, should take warning by his punishment, and not delude themselves with thinking that because they live free from the more scandalous vices, they shall escape damnation. In particular, all who make it their chief business to procure the pleasures of sense, neglecting to form their minds into a relish of spiritual and divine pleasures, may in this parable see their sad but certain end. They shall be excluded for ever from the presence of God, as incapable of his joys, although they may have pursued their pleasures with no visible injury to any person. But if men, not accused of injustice in getting riches, are thus punished for the bad use they have made of them, what must the misery of those be, who both acquire them unjustly, and use them sinfully? As this parable admonishes the rich, so it is profitable for the instruction and comfort of the poor; for it teaches them the proper method of bringing their afflictions to a happy issue, and shews them, that God will distribute the rewards and punishments of the life to come impartially, without respect of persons.

4. This parable teaches us the greatness of the punishment of the damned. 23. *And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments,*



*ments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.* We cannot from this representation infer, that burning with material fire shall be any part of the true and proper punishment of the damned. The never-dying worm, which is sometimes joined with the fire of hell, is confessed by all to be metaphorical, and therefore the fire may be so likewise. Yet no man can be absolutely certain that the wicked shall not be burnt with flames, seeing the resurrection of their bodies, and the union of them with their souls make the thing possible. In the mean time, be this as it will, the expressions found here, and in other passages of Scripture, taken in their lowest sense, intimate that the pains of hell will be very great. For if wicked men retain the passions, appetites, and desires, which were predominant in them on earth, as it is highly probable they will, (see Gal. vi. 7.) these desires being for ever deprived of their objects, must occasion a misery which they only can conceive, who have felt what it is to lose, without hope of recovery, that which they are most passionately fond of, and to be racked with the violence of desires, which they are sensible can never be gratified. Or although the passions themselves should perish with their objects, a direful eternal melancholy must necessarily ensue from the want of all desire and enjoyment, the misery of which is not to be conceived. In such a state, the bitter reflections which the damned will make on the happiness they have lost, must raise in them a dreadful storm of self-condemnation, envy, and despair. Besides, their consciences provoked by the evil actions of their lives, and now as it were let loose upon them, will prove more inexorable than ravening wolves; and the torment which they shall occasion will, in respect of its perpetuity, be as if a never-dying worm was always consuming them. This is the fire of hell, and those the everlasting burnings threatened with such terror in the word of God, where they are represented perhaps by material flames, to strike the dull and gross apprehensions of mankind; but they are far more terrible than the other, for the misery arising from these agonizing reflections must be of the most intense kind. And as there is not any thing in that state to divert the thoughts of the damned from them, they must be uninterrupted also, not admitting the least alleviation or refreshment.

5. From this parable we learn, that mens states are unalterably fixed after death, so that it is vain to hope for any end of their misery who are miserable, and unreasonable to fear any change of their prosperity who are happy. With respect to the latter, there can be little doubt; for, as one has observed, in a state where men are perfectly good, and can have no temptation to be otherwise, it is not imaginable that they should fall from that state. And as for the damned, it is certain that they must be reclaimed to virtue before they can be made happy. But in  
the



the virtue of a creature at least, it is essential that there be both freedom of will and of action ; virtue being not only the voluntary obedience of such as can disobey, but an obedience from conviction and love, in cases where it is possible for them to act contrary to both ; consequently an obedience from choice, and not from a necessity of nature. Upon these principles it may be questioned, whether the damned are capable of virtue. For while a man is actually lying under the immediate and complete punishment of his sin, while he is loaded with sufferings whose nature is such as necessarily fixes his attention to his sins as the cause of them, he cannot but be sensible of the evil of sin, because he feels it, and cannot but hate it, because it makes him miserable. Hence it appears, that though the damned repent, that is, have the strongest convictions of the evil of sin, with the bitterest grief and hatred of it, there is no virtue in all this, because it is not in their power to do otherwise ; and if there be no virtue in their repentance, we must acknowledge that it can have no influence to make them happy. To object that this argument derogates from the worth of conversion produced by the sufferings of this life, is not to the purpose ; for as matters stand at present, a man may in the course of providence be laid under many heavy calamities, without seeing the evil of his sin. The reason is, we are under no absolute necessity of considering these calamities as the punishment of our sin. And in fact, many suffer without ever thinking upon their sin as the cause of their suffering. Since therefore in our present repentance we are not necessitated, this character sufficiently distinguishes the sufferings and repentance of this life, from those of the life to come.

6. The parable informs us, that if the evidences of a future state already proposed do not persuade men, they will not be persuaded by any extraordinary evidences that can be offered, consistently with the freedom requisite to render them accountable for their actions. The truth is, we do not call the reality of a future state into question, either because it is not demonstrated by sufficient arguments, or because we are not able to comprehend them. Every man has within his own breast what leadeth him to the acknowledgment of this grand, this fundamental support of religion ; a certain foreboding of immortality, which it is not in his power ever to banish. But being addicted to sin, on account of the present pleasures attending it, we vehemently wish that there were no future state ; and in consequence of these wishes, we will not allow ourselves to weigh the arguments offered in its behalf, and so at length come to work ourselves into an actual disbelief of it. Or if the truth, proving too hard for us, should constrain our assent, the habit of yielding to our passions which we labour under, has influence sufficient to make us act contrary to our convictions. Wherefore, though the evidence



of a future state was more clear and forcible than it is, men might hinder themselves from seeing it, just as they hinder themselves from seeing the evidence by which it is at present supported. In a word, the proofs of the soul's immortality have always been sufficient to persuade those who have any candour, or love of goodness, and to demand more is unreasonable; because, although it were given, it might prove ineffectual. "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." Accordingly, Abraham's assertion is verified by daily experience; for they who look on all that the eternal Son of God, who actually arose from the dead, has said concerning the punishments of the damned, as so many idle tales, would pay little regard to any thing that could be told them, even by a person risen from the dead.

§ XCVII. *Concerning offences, and their forgiveness; see § 73. The disciples desire Jesus to increase their faith. Luke xvii. 1,—10.*

HAVING been thus derided by the Pharisees as a visionary, and affronted on account of his doctrine concerning the pernicious influence of the love of money, he took occasion to speak of affronts and offences (*σκανδαλα*, stumbling-blocks, provocations to sin). And though he represented such things as necessary, in respect of the exercise and improvement which they afford to virtue, and unavoidable by reason of the pride, anger, revenge, malice, and other jarring passions of men, he did not fail to set forth their evil nature in their dreadful punishment. Luke xvii. 1. *Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come; but \* woe unto him through whom they come.* 2. *Is were*

\* Ver. 1. *Woe unto him, &c.*] To understand our Lord in the above passage, it is necessary that we attend to an obvious distinction. All offences or temptations, are not of the same nature. Some of them are things in themselves sinful; others of them are things innocent. Jesus speaks of the first sort. Nor has he denounced against the authors of them a greater punishment than they deserve. Because to their own intrinsic malignity such things have this added, that they prove stumbling-blocks to others; so are of the most atrocious nature. When the other sort of offences happen to be mentioned, they are spoken of in milder terms. If the offence is given to a fellow Christian, the person guilty of it is blamed only for wanting that high degree of charity towards his brother, which the Christian religion enjoins. If it is given to a heathen, he is charged with being deficient with due concern for the glory of God. In the mean time, it must be observed on this head, that though the weakness of well meaning persons, who by relying on our example may be led to imitate us in things which they think sinful, is a strong reason, in point of charity, why we should forbear such actions, however innocent, unless we are under the greatest necessity of doing them; yet the perverseness of malicious minds, who are apt to misrepresent things, does by no means lay any obligation on a good man to forbear what he finds convenient for him, provided he himself



were better for him that a mill stone were hanged about his neck, and be cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones; pointing perhaps to the multitude, whom the Pharisees were endeavouring, by the whole of their conduct, to lead into the crime of rejecting the gospel. He spake likewise concerning a quarrelsome temper in his servants, but especially in the ministers and teachers of religion, insinuating that many grievous temptations to sin arise from thence; temptations both to the persons who are injured by that temper, because injuries beget injuries, and to those who are witnesses of the injury, encouraging them to venture on the like evils. But he prescribed a seasonable and prudent reprehension of the fault, accompanied with forgiveness on the part of the person injured, as the best means of disarming the temptations that may arise from such a disposition. Luke xvii. 3. *Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. 4. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.* See on Matt. xviii. 21. § 74. Sentiments of this kind delivered immediately after our Lord had been affronted by the falsest teachers for inculcating the purest doctrine, prove how truly he forgave them all the personal injuries they committed against him, throw a beautiful light on the few severe things he said of them in the course of his ministry, and are powerful recommendations of that amiable virtue, the forgiveness of injuries. This kind of discourses, however, being opposite to the common notions concerning the Messiah and his followers, staggered the faith of the disciples a little. They began to fear that Jesus, who talked in such a manner, was not the person they had hitherto taken him to be. They prayed him therefore to increase their faith, meaning perhaps that he should put an end to their doubts by erecting his kingdom speedily, and distributing the rewards they were expecting for their services. Or we may take the word *faith* in its ordinary sense, for the true principle of virtue, which the disciples desired their Master to strengthen in them, because the duty he had recommended was extremely difficult. 5. *And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.* 6. *And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, \* ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up*

himself knows it to be innocent. For the difference of the persons who are apt to be affected by our example, greatly alters the case of offences, and our behaviour with relation to them.

\* Ver. 6. *Ye might say, &c.*] Some taking this example, by which the efficacy of faith is illustrated, in a literal sense, have supposed that the apostles desired Jesus to increase their faith of working miracles. But the expression is proverbial, signifying not the working of miracles, but the doing of things extremely difficult. See another proverb of the same kind, Matt. xvii. 20. § 73.



*up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea ; and it should obey you : If ye had the smallest degree of true faith, it would overcome all temptations, even those, the conquering of which may be compared to the plucking up of trees, and planting them in the ocean, that is, compared to things impossible.*

Having thus spoken, Jesus returned to his subject, telling the apostles that after they had done their utmost, to discharge the whole duty incumbent on them as God's servants sent forth to seek and save lost souls, they were not to imagine that they merited any thing thereby. And to make them sensible of the justness of his doctrine, he bade them consider in what manner they received the services of their own dependents. They reckoned themselves under no obligation to a servant for doing the duty which his station bound him to perform. In like manner, he their Master did not reckon himself indebted to them for their services. And therefore instead of valuing themselves upon what they had done, and expecting great rewards for it, it became them, after having performed all that was commanded them, to say, that they had done nothing but their duty. Luke xvii. 7. *But which of you having a servant ploughing, or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go, and sit down to meat ? 8. And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me till I have eaten and drunken ; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink ? 9. Doth he thank that servant, because he did the things that were commanded him ? I trow not. 10. So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants ; we have done that which was our duty to do.* His discourse concerning the true use of riches, and the right manner of discharging their duty as God's servants sent forth to seek and save lost sinners, our Lord concluded in this manner, knowing the frame of mind his disciples were in. He saw their faith begin to stagger, because the expected rewards were deferred, and little encouragement was given them to think that they would ever be bestowed. Perhaps likewise he knew, that they were somewhat infected with the leaven of the Pharisees, who having an high opinion of their own righteousness, zealously maintained the doctrine of the merit of good works, together with the possibility of a man's performing more than was commanded him, that is, the possibility of performing works of supererogation. Or though the disciples were free from these errors, Jesus on this occasion might see fit to condemn them, because he foresaw that in his own church they would creep in, spread widely, and be productive of many hurtful consequences.



§ XCVIII. *Jesus is called into Judea to cure Lazarus. His ministry in Perea ends.* See § 84. John xi. 1,—16.

ABOUT this time a friend of Christ, named Lazarus, fell sick at Bethany, a village about two miles from Jerusalem, but at a great distance from the place where our Lord now was, in the country beyond Jordan. John xi. 1. *Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.* 2. \* *It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.* Lazarus' sisters observing that his sickness was of a dangerous kind, thought proper to send word of it to Jesus; for they firmly expected, that he who had cured so many strangers, would willingly come and give health to one whom he loved so tenderly. 3. *Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold he whom thou lovest is sick.* When Jesus heard this, he answered that the sickness of Lazarus would not be the means of his death, but was designed as an occasion of manifesting the power of God, and of confirming the doctrine and mission of the Son of God. 4. *When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.* 5. *Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus,* on account of their unfeigned piety towards God, their friendship and affection towards one another, and their faith in him as Messiah; ver. 27. § 100. 6. *When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.* The evangelist mentions the love which Jesus bore to Mary, and her sister, and Lazarus, before he informs us how that after receiving their message he staid two days without stirring from the place where he was. His design in this might be, to insinuate that Christ's lingering so long after the message came, did not proceed from want of concern for his friends, but happened according to the counsels of his own wisdom. For the length of time which Lazarus lay in the grave, put his death beyond all possibility of doubt, and removed every suspicion

\* Ver. 2 *It was that Mary, &c.*] Because the evangelist characterizes Mary the sister of Lazarus by her action of anointing the Lord's feet, Grotius imagines that the three anointings mentioned in the gospels were one and the same. But the answer is obvious. John having mentioned one anointing only unto all who read his history, she is sufficiently known by that character. Yet if one should say, that the evangelist does not mean to distinguish her from the other Marys, he would perhaps speak the truth. Because, to have called her the sister of Lazarus was sufficient for that purpose. Her anointing Jesus is mentioned on this occasion, only to make the reader consider how much and tenderly she loved the Lord, who doubly repaid all the kindnesses that were shewed him, as in this very instance, notwithstanding he did not immediately on receiving the sister's message go into Judea, but *abode two days in the same place where he was.*



suspicion of a fraud, and so afforded Jesus a fit opportunity of displaying the love that he bare to Lazarus, as well as his own almighty power, in his unquestionable resurrection from the dead. It is true, the sisters were thus kept a while in painful anxiety on account of their brother's life, and in the conclusion were pierced with the sorrow of seeing him die. Yet they would think themselves abundantly recompensed, by the evidence accruing to the gospel from this astonishing miracle, as well as by the inexpressible surprise of joy which they felt, when they received their brother again from the dead.

When the proper time of setting out for Bethany was come, Jesus desired his disciples to accompany him into Judea. But they expressed some unwillingness to undertake the journey; not imagining that it was proposed on Lazarus' account, whom they supposed out of danger, because Jesus had said of his sickness, that it was not unto death. It seems, the attempts which the inhabitants of Jerusalem lately made upon their Master's life, had frightened them exceedingly. John xi. 7. *Then after that saith he unto his disciples, Let us go into Judea again.* 8. *His disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again?* Jesus replied, that as the hours of the day are appointed for the various works necessary to human life, and as he who travels in the day-time needs not be afraid of stumbling, because he has the sun, the light of this world, to shew him his way; even so, the man who has a season allotted him of performing God's work, and at the same time the light of the divine call requiring him to engage in it, needs not be afraid of any danger he exposes himself to in performing it, God, whom he serves, being always able to preserve him. 9. *Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world.* 10. *But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him:* If any man undertakes God's work at an improper season, or without a call, he may justly be afraid of the danger he exposes himself to thereby. 11. *These things said he; and after that, he saith unto them, Our friend, Lazarus, sleepeth:* (see on Mark v. v. § 35.) *but I go that I may awake him out of sleep.* The disciples understanding his words in a literal sense, replied, that they took his sleeping as a symptom of his speedy recovery; and by saying so, insinuated that there was no need of their going into Judea on Lazarus' account. 12. *Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.* 13. *Howbeit, Jesus spake of his death; but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep:* The real meaning of what Jesus said was, that Lazarus was dead, though his words were such, that the disciples understood him as speaking of natural sleep. 14. *Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.* 15. *And I am glad*



*glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe.* I am glad for your sakes that I was not in Judea before he died; for had I been there, and recovered him, your faith in me as the Messiah must have wanted that great confirmation which it shall receive by your beholding me raise him again from the dead. *Nevertheless, (αλλα, therefore, so the particle is used Acts x. 20. xxvi. 16.) let us go unto him. 16. Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellow-disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.* Thomas thought, that by going into Judea at this time, Jesus endangered his life, and generously proposed, that, rather than forsake their Master, they should all lay down their lives with him.

Thus, as Dr Lardner has remarked, Jesus, who could have raised Lazarus from the dead without opening his lips, or rising from his seat, leaves the place of his retirement beyond Jordan, and takes a long journey into Judea, where the Jews lately attempted to kill him. The reason was, his being present in person, and raising Lazarus to life again before so many witnesses at Bethany, where he died and was well known, would be the means of bringing the men of that and future ages to believe in his doctrine, which is so well fitted to prepare them for a resurrection to eternal life; an admirable proof and emblem of which he gave them in this great miracle.

§ XCIX. *Ten lepers are cured by Jesus in Samaria; one of them who was a Samaritan returns after his cure, and gives Jesus thanks for it. Luke xvii. 11,—19.*

THEIR journey to Judea being now resolved upon, Jesus and his disciples departed. Luke says, he went to Jerusalem; and that in his way he passed through Samaria and Galilee. It seems he crossed the Jordan nigh to where it issues out of the lake of Gennezareth, and so came into the lower Galilee; which to the south was bounded by Samaria, and to the east by the river, Joseph. Bell. iii. 2. From the lower Galilee Jesus came into Samaria, and from Samaria into Judea, and so to Bethany, taking Jerusalem in his way. Luke xvii. 11. *And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that \* he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. 12. And as he entered into a certain village, there met him † ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off. As le-*  
pers

\* Ver. 11. *He passed through the midst of Samaria, &c.]* Because Samaria is first mentioned, Le Clerc would have the words, διηξεντο δια μου Σαμαρειας και Γαλιλαιας, translated, “He passed through between Samaria and Galilee;” that is, after crossing the Jordan, he travelled through the confines of the two countries, then turned into Samaria. By adopting this translation, the time spent in the journey from Perea, will have been less than it could be, if he now made a tour through Galilee.

† Ver. 12. *Ten men, &c.]* If it is asked how so many lepers came together,



pers were banished from the towns, they were likewise obliged to keep at a distance from the roads which led to them. Curiosity however to see the travellers who passed, or it may be an inclination to beg, having brought these ten as nigh to the public road as they could, they espied Jesus, and cried to him, beseeching him to take pity on them, and cure them. It seems they knew him personally, having seen him before, or guessed that it might be he, by the crowd which followed him. 13. *And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.* 14. *And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go, shew yourselves unto the priests ;* see on Mark i. 43. § 30. *And it came to pass, that as they went, they were cleansed.* Among these miserable objects, there happened to be a native of the country, who as soon as he knew that his cure was completed, came back, praising God for the mercy he had shewed him. And though he had kept at a distance from Jesus before, yet being sensible that he was now perfectly clean, he came near, that all might have an opportunity of beholding the miracle ; and falling on his face at Christ's feet, he humbly thanked him for condescending so graciously to cure him. 15. *And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God.* 16. *And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks ; and he was a Samaritan.* Wherefore, to make known the good disposition of the man, though he professed a false religion, and to intimate that the others, who were enlightened with the knowledge of truth, ought to have shewed as great a sense of piety and gratitude as he, 17. *Jesus answering, said, Were there not ten cleansed ? but \*where are the nine ?* 18. *There are not found that returned to give glory to God,* by a public acknowledgement of

ther, the answer is, that being secluded from the society of men on account of their disease, they sought the comforts of sociality in one another's company.

\* Ver. 17. *Where are the nine ?*] The ingratitude of the Jews will appear monstrous, if we consider that leprosy, the malady from which they were delivered, is in itself one of the most loathsome diseases incident to human nature, and a disease which by the law of Moses subjected them to greater hardships than any distemper whatsoever. But though the cure of this dreadful ailment was produced without the smallest pain, or even trouble to the lepers, and so speedily, that it was completed by the time they had got a little way off, as appears by the Samaritan's finding Jesus where he left him, the Jews would not give themselves the trouble of returning to glorify God, by making the miracle public, nor to honour Jesus by acknowledging the favour. Such were the people that gloried in their being *holy*, and insolently called the men of all other nations *dogs*. But their hypocrisy and presumption received a severe reprimand on this occasion. For our Lord, in his observation on their behaviour, plainly declared that the outward profession of any religion, however true and excellent that religion may be in itself, is of no value before God, in comparison of piety and inward holy dispositions.



of the miracle, *save this stranger.* Luke xvii. 19. *And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way, thy faith hath made thee whole ;* see on Mark ix. 23. § 73.

§ C. *Lazarus is raised from the dead at Bethany ; after which, Jesus goes to Ephraim, a city near the wilderness of Judea.* John xi. 17,—54.

WHEN Jesus and his disciples were come nigh to Bethany, they learned from some of the inhabitants whom they met accidentally, that Lazarus was four days buried. Wherefore, as a day or two must have been spent in making preparations for the burial, he could not well be less than five days dead when Jesus arrived. John xi. 17. *Then when Jesus came, he found that he had lain in the grave four days already.* 18. *Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off.* 19. *And \* many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.* The evangelist mentions the vicinity of Bethany to Jerusalem, and speaks of the company of friends that were with the two sisters, to shew that by the direction of Providence this great miracle had many witnesses, some of whom were persons of note, and inhabitants of Jerusalem. See on John xii. 5. § 110.

It seems the news of our Lord's coming, reached Bethany before he arrived ; for Martha, the sister of Lazarus, having heard of it, went out to meet him. Her intention, no doubt, was to welcome him ; but being in an excess of grief, the first thing she uttered, was a complaint that he had not come sooner. John xi. 20. *Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him ; but Mary sat still in the house.* Martha was so overjoyed with the news, that she did not take time to tell her sister, but went out in all haste. 21. *Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.* Imagining that Jesus could not cure her brother while at a distance from him, she thought, that by delaying to come, he had neglected to save his life. Thus Martha, in one respect, betrayed a mean notion of the Lord's power ; though in another her faith aimed at something very high ; for she immediately added,  
John

\* Ver. 18. *Many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary to comfort them.* The general time of mourning for deceased relations, both among Jews and Gentiles, was seven days. During these days of mourning, their friends and neighbours visited them, in order that by their presence and conversation they might assist them in bearing their loss. Many, therefore, in so populous a part of the country, must have been going to and coming from the sisters, while the days of their mourning for Lazarus lasted. The concourse too would be the greater, as it was the time of the passover. Besides, a vast multitude now attended Jesus in his journey. This great miracle therefore must have had many witnesses.



John xi. 22. *But I know, that even now whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee* : insinuating, that she believed his prayer might yet restore her brother to life. However, as she thought he could of himself raise the dead, she founded her hopes not on his own power, but on the power of God, to be exerted at his intercession. It seems she had not heard of the resurrection either of Jairus' daughter, or of the widow of Nain's son ; or she might think her brother's resurrection more difficult than theirs, perhaps because he was longer in the state of the dead. 23. *Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.* His meaning was, that he should be raised immediately, (see ver. 40.) according to her desire ; yet, as the thing was so great, and beyond even her own expectation, she durst not understand him in any sense that favoured her wishes. 24. *Martha said unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day* ; see on Matt. xxviii. 17. § 159. To cherish her weak faith, and as it were by steps to raise her to the belief and acknowledgment of his power, 25. *Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life* : I am the author of the resurrection, and of the life which followeth upon the resurrection ; therefore I am able to raise the dead at any time, and as well now as hereafter. *He that believeth in me, as thy brother did, though he were dead, yet shall he live, provided I please to raise him.* 26. *And whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, \* shall never die, if I am pleased to prevent him from dying. Believest thou this ?* 27. *She saith unto him, Yea, Lord ; I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which, according to the ancient prophecies, should come into the world.* By replying that she believed him to be the promised Messiah, Martha insinuated that she confided implicitly in every thing he said, and that there was no instance of power whatsoever, which he was pleased to claim, that exceeded her belief. She began, it seems, to entertain some confused expectation

\* Ver. 26. *Shall never die, if I am pleased to prevent him from dying* ] That this was Christ's meaning, is evident from what he added, viz. *Believest thou this ?* For as Martha had declared her firm expectation of her brother's resurrection at the last day, she actually declared her belief of the resurrection of all good men to eternal life, and particularly of such as believed on Jesus. And therefore, had he been speaking of their resurrection, he needed not have asked if she believed what he said. Besides, in scripture, we find many general expressions of this kind, which must be limited by the subject to which they are applied ; see on John xiii. 36. § 130. It is true, his question may be referred to the first sentence which he spake, thus, *Believest thou that I am the resurrection and the life ?* For though Martha believed that there was to be a general resurrection, she might not know that Jesus was to be the author of it. Yet even on this supposition, his words must be understood as above ; because the only view with which he could on this occasion declare, that he was the resurrection and the life, or require Martha to believe it, was to make her sensible that he could raise any dead person instantly, and prevent any living person he pleased from dying.



tion of her brother's immediate resurrection. Afterwards, indeed, when she considered the greatness of the thing more deliberately, many doubts arose, ver. 39. At present, however, having some hope, she did not invite Jesus to go home with her, but leaving him in the field, ran and called her sister to come out, as he had ordered. For he designed that Mary and her companions should likewise have the honour and pleasure of being present at this stupendous miracle. John xi. 28. *And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee.*

Mary no sooner heard the joyful news of the arrival of Jesus, than she rose and went to him, without speaking a word to the company of friends, who, because she was of a softer disposition than her sister, paid especial attention to her grief; for they remained with her in the house after Martha was gone out; and when she went out they followed her, fearing that she was going to the grave to weep there. They even wept with her, when they saw her weep as she spake to Jesus. 29. *As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came unto him.* 30. *Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him.* 31. *The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary that she rose up hastily, and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there.* By this means were the Jews that had come from Jerusalem brought out to the grave, and made witnesses of the resurrection of Lazarus. When Mary came to Jesus, she fell down at his feet, and expressed herself just as Martha had done, only she wept as she spake. 32. *Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.* 33. *When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled.* He could not look on the affliction of the two sisters and their friends, without having a share in it. Besides, he groaned deeply, (see on Luke x. 21. § 81.) being grieved to find that his friends entertained a suspicion of his loving them less than their great love to him might claim; *and was troubled.* In the Greek it is, "he troubled himself," *ταραξεν εαυτον*, he allowed himself to be angry at the malice of the devil, who had introduced sin into the world, and thereby made such havoc of the human kind. But to keep them no longer in suspense, he asked where they had buried Lazarus, that he might go to the grave, and give them immediate relief, by bringing him to life again. On this occasion it appeared, that Jesus was possessed of a delicate sensibility of human passions. For when he beheld Martha, and Mary, and their companions around him all in tears, the tender feelings of love, and pity, and friendship, moved him to such a degree,



degree, that he wept as he went along, John xi. 34. *And said, Where have ye laid him? they say unto him, Lord, come and see.* 35. *Jesus wept.* In this grief of the Son of God, there was a greatness and generosity, not to say an amiableness of disposition, infinitely nobler than that which the stoic philosophers aimed at in their so much boasted apathy. 36. *Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!* 37. *And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?* By his weeping, they were all convinced that he loved Lazarus exceedingly. Some of them, however, interpreted this circumstance to his disadvantage; for, according to their mean way of judging, they fancied that he had suffered him to fall under the stroke of death, for no other reason but want of power to rescue him. And thinking the miracle, said to have been worked on the blind man during the feast of tabernacles, at least as difficult as the curing of an acute distemper, they called the former in question because the latter had been neglected. If, said they, he has really opened the eyes of the blind, might he not have preserved this man from death?

By all the wonderful works which Jesus had done, these stubborn people were not persuaded, neither would they be convinced by the great miracle he was about to perform. They were to see him raise one to life and health again, that had lain four days in the grave. Yet so hard were their hearts, that many of them would persist in their infidelity still. Jesus, who knew the discourses which they now held among themselves in private concerning him, was likewise fully acquainted with the hardness of their hearts, and at the same time foresaw the miseries which their unbelief would involve them in. The thought of all these things afflicted him, and made him groan as he went to the sepulchre. 38. *Jesus therefore again groaning in himself, cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. See on Matt. xxviii. 5. § 149.* 39. *Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh; for he hath been dead four days.* She meant

\* Ver. 39. *He hath been dead four days*] The word *dead* is not in the original, being improperly supplied by the translators. *Καὶ, ὅτι τετραήμερος γὰρ ἔστι.* *Lord, by this time he stinketh, for he is four days buried.* *Τετραήμερος* signifies "quatruiduanus, one who has continued in any state or place four days." Martha's meaning therefore was, that her brother had been in the grave four days, as is plain likewise from ver. 17. Providence directed Martha to mention this circumstance before Lazarus was raised, that the greatness of the miracle might be manifest to all who were present. For if her brother was four days buried, he must have been dead at least five or six. It is beautiful to observe the gradation that was in the resurrections of the dead, performed by our Lord. The first person whom he raised, viz. Jairus' daughter, had been in the state of the dead only a few hours; the second, namely, the widow of Nain's son, was raised



meant to insinuate, that her brother's resurrection was not to be expected, considering the state he was in. Wherefore, John xi. 40. *Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God?* i. e. an instance of the great power and goodness of God, in thy brother's resurrection. 41. *Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid.* On many occasions, Jesus had publicly appeared to his own miracles as the proofs of his mission; but he did not ordinarily make a formal address to his Father before he worked them; though to have done so, would have shewed from whence he derived his authority. Nevertheless, being about to raise Lazarus from the dead, he prayed for his resurrection, to make the persons present sensible that in working his miracles he acted by the assistance, not of devils, as his enemies maliciously affirmed, but of God; and that this miracle in particular, could not be effected without an immediate interposition of the divine power. The evangelist, it is true, does not say directly either that Jesus prayed, or that he prayed for this end. But the thanksgiving which he tells us he offered up, implies both. *And Jesus lift up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.* 42. *And I knew that thou bearest me always; but because of the people which stand by, I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me:* I did not pray for my own sake, as if I had entertained any doubt of thine empowering me to do this miracle, for I know that thou hearest me always; but I prayed for the people's sake, to make them sensible that thou lovest me, hast sent me, and art continually with me. By this prayer and thanksgiving, therefore, Jesus has insinuated, that his own resurrection from the dead is an infallible proof of his divine mission; no power inferior to God's, being able to accomplish a thing of this kind. 43. *And when he had thus spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.* The dead man heard the voice of the Son of God, and came forth immediately. For he did not revive slowly, and by degrees, as the dead child did which was raised by the prophet Elisha. But the effect thus instantly following the command, plainly shewed whose the power was that revived the breathless clay. If the Lord had not intended this, instead of speaking, he might have raised Lazarus by a secret inward volition. Because the people present were not so much as dreaming of a resurrection, they must have been surprised when they heard our Lord pray for it. The cry, "Lazarus, come

sed as his friends were carrying him out to burial. But when Jesus recalled Lazarus to life, he had been in the grave no less than four days; and therefore, according to our way of apprehending things, his resurrection was the greatest of the three. As Peter Chrysologus observes, "the whole power of death was accomplished upon him, and the whole power of the resurrection shewed forth in him."



come forth," must have astonished them more, and raised their curiosity to a prodigious pitch. But when they saw him spring out alive, and in perfect health, that had been rotting in the grave four days, they could not but be agitated with many different passions, and overwhelmed with inexpressible amazement. John xi. 44. *And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes, (see on Matt. xxviii. 5. § 149.) and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.* It would have been the least part of the miracle, had Jesus made the rollers wherewith Lazarus was bound, unloose themselves from around his body before he came forth. But he brought him out just as he was lying, and ordered the spectators to loose him, that they might be the better convinced of the miracle. Accordingly, in taking off the grave clothes, they had the fullest evidence both of his death and resurrection. For on the one hand, the manner in which he was swathed, (see on John xix. 40. § 146.) must of itself have killed him in a little time, had he been alive when buried; consequently, it demonstrated, beyond all exception, that Lazarus was several days dead before Jesus called him forth. Besides, in stripping him, the linen might offer, both to their eyes and smell, abundant proofs of his putrefaction, (ver. 39.) and by that means convince them that he had not been in a deliquium, but was really departed. On the other hand, by his lively countenance appearing when the napkin was removed, his fresh colour, his active vigour, and his brisk walking, they who came near him and handled him, were made sensible that he was in perfect health, and had an opportunity to try the truth of the miracle, by the closest examination.

Considering the nature and circumstances of this great miracle, it ought to have silenced the peevishness of cavilling, might have overcome the obstinacy of prejudice, and should have put to shame the impudence of malice. Wherefore, we cannot help being surprised to find, that the cry, "Lazarus, come forth," did not produce, on all the people present, an effect some way similar to that which it had on Lazarus. It raised him from the natural death, and might have raised the stupidest of the spectators from the spiritual, by working in them the living principle of faith.

Every reader must be sensible, that there is something incomparably beautiful in the whole of our Lord's behaviour on this occasion. After having given such an astonishing instance of his power, he did not speak one word in his own praise either directly or indirectly. He did not chide the disciples for their unwillingness to accompany him into Judca. He did not rebuke the Jews for having in former instances maliciously detracted from the lustre of his miracles, every one of which derived additional credit



dit from this incontestable wonder. He did not say how much they were to blame for persisting in their infidelity, though he well knew what they would do. He did not insinuate, even in the most distant manner, the obligations which Lazarus and his sisters were laid under by this signal favour. He did not upbraid Martha and Mary with the discontent they had expressed, at his having delayed to come to the relief of their brother. Nay, he did not so much as put them in mind of the mean notion they had entertained of his power; but always consistent with himself, he was on this, as on every other occasion, a pattern of perfect humility, and absolute self-denial.

A miracle so remarkable, performed in the neighbourhood of the capital city, before a multitude of spectators, many of them enemies, could not but make a great noise, and upon different persons must have had very different effects. John xi. 45. *Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him:* The greatest part of the witnesses present at the miracle, when they had seen it, believed Jesus to be Messiah. So incontestable a proof of his power and authority, left them no room to doubt of his character. They knew that no impostor could perform any miracle; and so great an one as the resurrection of a person who had been in the grave four days, was a miracle worthy of Messiah himself. Willing therefore to know the truth, they yielded to the force of this evidence. Nevertheless, others of the eye-witnesses being ill-disposed and prejudiced, remained in their unbelief still, and departed as firmly resolved to oppose Jesus as ever. Accordingly, they went and told the Pharisees what they had seen, in order that they might take such measures as would crush his growing reputation. 46. *But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, the chiefs of the sect who lived in the city, and told them what things Jesus had done.* The account which these men gave of Lazarus' resurrection, raised the indignation of the rulers to the highest pitch. They called a council forthwith, and after consultation, blamed one another for having suffered Jesus to go so long unpunished. But this miracle being too evident to be denied, as all his miracles indeed were, they did not, even in their most private conferences, say or insinuate to one another, that their displeasure and opposition proceeded from his passing false miracles upon the ignorant vulgar. They rather condemned him upon the truth and notoriety of his miracles; pretending, that they were designed to establish a new sect in religion, which might endanger not their church only, but their state. Thus though the Pharisees were his sworn enemies, they could not help giving him an ample testimony, even in full court. 47. *Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doth many miracles.* 48 *If*  
we



*we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him ; and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation ; (rev-  
 erer, our temple ; so the word is used, Acts vi. 14. xxi. 28.)* If we do not bestir ourselves to prevent it, the common people, astonished at his miracles, will certainly set him up for Messiah, and the Romans, on pretence of their rising in rebellion, will take away both our liberty and religion. They entered therefore into a resolution of putting Jesus to death at all hazards. But those politicians were taken in their own craftiness ; for while they proposed, by killing Jesus, to avoid the destruction of their temple and city, the sin which they committed in killing the Prince of life, was so great, that God in his just indignation made the very people, whose resentment they proposed to avoid by this wicked measure, the instruments of his vengeance. He brought the Roman armies against them, who destroyed those murderers, and burnt up their city ; leaving in that dreadful catastrophe, an awful warning to all statesmen, to beware of prosecuting unjust measures on pretence of consulting the good of the nation whose affairs they direct. To return, the members of the Jewish council were not all unanimous in their resolution of putting Jesus to death. Some of them who were his disciples, (John xii. 42.) particularly Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, urged the unlawfulness of what they proposed to do, from the consideration of his miracles and innocence. But the high priest Caiaphas treated Christ's friends in the council with contempt, as a parcel of weak ignorant people who were unacquainted with the nature of government, which, said he, requires that certain acts of injustice should not be scrupled at, when they are expedient for the safety of the state. John xi. 49. *And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, 50. Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.* Doubtless Caiaphas said this from a principle of human policy ; nevertheless the evangelist assures us that his tongue was directed at that time by the Spirit of God, in which respect he spake not of himself, but foretold that Jesus should die for the nation. 51. *And this spake he, not of himself ; \* but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation : 52. And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.* To conclude, the majority of the council having resolved

\* Ver. 51. *But he being high priest, &c* ] As God was wont anciently to communicate his oracles to the high priest, clothed with the pontifical garments, so he inspired these words into Caiaphas, who now bare that office, though he was not sensible himself of the inspiration, and meant what he said in a different sense from what God intended should be signified by it.



red to put Jesus to death at all hazards, they consulted no longer upon that point, but from thenceforth deliberated only concerning the best method of effecting it. 53. *Then from that day forth, they took counsel together for to put him to death.* The evangelist does not tell us what the measure was which they pitched upon for this purpose; only from the last verse of the chapter, it is highly probable that they agreed to issue out a proclamation against Jesus, promising a reward to any who would shew where he was, that they might take him. This was the reason why our Lord did not now go to Jerusalem, though he was within two miles of it, but returned to Ephraim, a city upon the borders of the wilderness, where he abode with his disciples, being unwilling to go far away, because the passover at which he was to suffer approached. 54. *Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews, but went thence into a country near to the wilderness, into \* a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples.*

\* Ver. 54. *A city called Ephraim.*] The situation of Ephraim has not yet been determined with certainty. All that John says of it is, that it stood in a country near to the wilderness. Perhaps he meant the wilderness, which is said to have gone up from Jericho to Bethel, Josh. xvi. 1. For Josephus (Bell. v. 8.) mentions Ephraim as not far from Bethel. Eusebius, in his Onomastic. upon the word *Αῖμα* (the ancient Ai) tells us, that Bethel lay in the road from Jerusalem to Sichem in Samaria, at the distance of twelve miles from Jerusalem. The same author says, that Ephraim was a large city, eight miles from Aelia (Jerusalem) toward the north. Jerom's copy of Eusebius, reads twenty miles in this passage. See Reland's *Palestina Illustrata*.

§ Cl. *At Ephraim Jesus foretells the destruction of the Jewish state the first time; see § 123. Also his own sufferings the fifth time; see § 73. 106. He delivers the parable of the unjust judge and injured widow. Luke xvii. 20,—37. xviii. 1,—8.*

WHILE Jesus was in Ephraim, the Pharisees asked him when the kingdom of God, by which they meant Messiah's kingdom, was to commence. They had very grand notions of the extent of Messiah's kingdom, the number of his subjects, the strength of his armies, the pomp and eclat of his court, and were eager to have that glorious empire speedily erected. Or being inveterate enemies of our Lord, they might ask the question in derision, because every thing about Jesus was so unlike to the Messiah whom they expected. Luke xvii. 20. *And when he was demanded of the Pharisees when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation. 21. Neither shall they say, Lo here, or lo there; for behold \* the kingdom*

\* Ver. 21. *The kingdom of God is within you.*] The Greek phrase *ἐν ὑμῖν*,  
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*kingdom of God is within you.* To correct their mistaken notions, he told them, that Messiah's kingdom does not consist in any pompous outward form of government, to be erected in this or that particular country, with the terror of arms and the confusion of war; but that it consists in the subjection of mens wills, and in the conformity of their minds to the laws of God, to be effected by a new dispensation of religion, which was already begun. Accordingly they were not to seek for it in this or that place, saying, Lo here, or lo there; for the kingdom of God, the new dispensation of religion productive of the dominion of righteousness in mens minds was already begun among them, being preached by Christ and his apostles, and confirmed by innumerable miracles.

Having thus spoken to the Pharisees, he addressed his disciples, and in the hearing of the Pharisees prophesied concerning the destruction of the Jewish state, whose constitution, both religious and civil, was the chief obstacle to the erection of his kingdom; for the attachment which the Jews had to their constitution, was the spring of all their opposition to Christianity, and of their cruelty to its abettors. A prediction of this nature, delivered as the continuation of his answer to the Pharisees, who desired to know when Messiah's kingdom should come, plainly signified that it would first become conspicuous in the destruction of the Jewish commonwealth. But because love and compassion were eminent parts of the Lord's character, he spake of that dreadful catastrophe in such a manner as might be most profitable to his hearers. He told them first of all, that they and the whole nation should be in the greatest distress before the destruction of their constitution, and the full establishment of Messiah's kingdom; and that they should passionately wish for Messiah's personal presence to comfort them under their afflictions, but should not be favoured with it. Luke xvii. 22. *And he said unto the disciples, The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it.* Next he cautioned them against the deceivers, which in that time of universal distress would arise, pretending to be Messiah, and promising to deliver the people from the powers which oppressed them. He told them that these deceivers would lurk a while in private, till by the diligence of their emissaries spreading abroad their fame, and exhorting the people to go out to them, they had gathered a force sufficient to support them. In such a case, said he, do not go forth to them, nor follow them, for by this mark you shall know them to be deceivers. 23. *And they shall say to you,*

*υμεν*, is by most critics thought to be equivalent to *υμεις*. See Xenoph. lib. 1. Cyropæd. p. 211. where things which they had along with them in the camp, are said to be *υμεις*; *αυτοι*. See also Beza upon this passage.



*you, See here, or see there ; go not after them, nor follow them.* The reason is, my coming to deliver you shall be sudden, and unexpected, and with great power like lightning ; for I will come in my own strength, and no opposition whatsoever shall be able to stand in my way. I will overthrow my enemies every where with swift destruction, and establish my religion and government in a great part of the world as suddenly as lightning flies through the sky. Only before these things, I am to suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation. Luke xvii. 24. *For as the lightning that lighteth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven : so shall also the Son of man be in his day.* 25. *But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation.* In the next place, he foretold the stupidity and unconcernedness of the generation he was to destroy, comparing it to that of the old world about the time of the flood, and to that of the Sodomites before their city was destroyed by fire from heaven. 26. *And as it was in \* the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.* 27 *They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark ; and the flood came and destroyed them all.* The people of the old world, wholly unaffected with the admonitions which Noah gave them while building the ark, and with the threatenings which he then denounced, went on as usual, following their ordinary occupations, and pursuing their pleasures, both lawful and unlawful, in great carnal security. And so, ere they were aware, the flood came and destroyed them all. 28. *Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot, they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded :* 29. *But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all :* 30. *Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.* The Jewish people shall be sunk in the same carnal security, and shall suffer the like exemplary punishment, at the time when God reveals to the world, the person who was foretold by Daniel under the denomination of the Son of man. 31. *In that day, (the day when the Son of man is revealed, as it is expressed*

\* Ver. 26. *The days of Noe, &c.*] The days of Noe, in this passage, signify the days in which he preached to the old world the righteousness which they ought to have practised, and denounced the judgments of God to fall on them if they did not repent of their wickedness. By parity of reason, the days of the Son of man signify the days in which Christ and his apostles preached to the Jewish nation, whose behaviour here is said to have been the same with that of the old world and of the Sodomites, under the preaching of Noah and Lot ; they went on secure, and wholly intent upon their worldly affairs, without being in the least moved by the repeated warnings of the divine judgments, which Jesus and his apostles gave them. For which cause these judgments fell on them, and destroyed them.



expressed ver. 30.) \* *he which shall be upon the house-top, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down, to take it away; and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back*, namely to his house. And lest they should not have been sufficiently apprehensive of their danger, he put them in mind of Lot's wife; insinuating that the calamities from which they were to flee, were as imminent as that from which she fled, and that to linger after they observed the signs thereof, would be as dangerous in their case as in hers. - 32. † *Remember Lot's wife.* The example of Lot's

\* Ver. 31. *He which shall be on the house-top* ] The Jewish houses were flat-roofed, and commonly had two stairs, one within, and the other without the house, by which they went up to the roof; see Antiq. Dilc. iv. Christ's meaning therefore was, that as soon as they observed the first signs of the impending ruin about to fall, they were to fly for their lives, without staying a moment to save their substance; he who was on the house-top, was not to go down into his house to take away his stuff, but was to go off by the outer passage, as the speediest way of escaping.

† Ver. 32. *Remember Lot's wife.* ] This unfortunate woman had been informed by angels of the destruction of Sodom, and promised deliverance; but was expressly forbidden to look back on any account, in the time of her flight, because it was proper they should flee speedily, in the faith of the divine declaration, and perfectly contented, or at least endeavouring to be so, that they had escaped with their lives. Nevertheless, she presumed to entertain doubts concerning the destruction of her wicked acquaintance, perhaps because she did not fully believe the angel's message, or because she thought that God might repent himself of the evil he had threatened. Moreover, being inwardly sorry for the loss of her relations and goods, and at the same time not sufficiently valuing the kindness of God, who had sent his angels to preserve her, she lingered behind her husband, discontented and vexed, allowing him and his two daughters to enter into Zoar before her, (Gen. xix. 26.) and thereby laying a temptation in Lot's way to look back upon her, on account of the danger she was exposing herself to. But no sooner had the good man, with his believing children, entered the place of their refuge, than God poured out the fullness of his wrath upon the offending cities. The thunder, the shrieking of the inhabitants, the crashing of the houses falling, were heard at a distance. Lot's wife, not yet in Zoar, was at length convinced that all was lost, and being exceedingly displeased, she despised the gift of her life; for in contradiction to the angel's command, she turned about and looked at the dreadful devastation, probably also bewailed her perishing kindred and wealth, ver. 14. But her infidelity, her disobedience, her ingratitude, and her love of the world, received a just though severe rebuke. In an instant she was turned into a pillar of salt, being burnt up by the flames, out of whose reach she would not fly, and so was made a perpetual monument of God's displeasure to all posterity. Her looking back, though in itself a thing indifferent, yet as it was done contrary to the divine prohibition, and expressed such a complication of evil dispositions, was so far from being a small sin, that it fully deserved the punishment inflicted on it. And this punishment was the more necessary, as it shewed all the inhabitants of Canaan, that the deliverance of Lot and his family from the vengeance of Sodom, was wrought in honour of their righteousness; a signal instance of which they gave on this occasion, in their leaving Sodom, together with their nearest relations, and all their substance, at God's command. Moreover, the manifestation that was now made of their faith

and



Lot's wife was very fitly produced by our Lord as a warning to his disciples, and to all his hearers. For if any of them, through an immoderate love of the world, should linger attempting to save their goods, after they were admonished from heaven of their danger, by the signs which prognosticated the destruction of Jerusalem; or if, through want of faith, any of them fancied that the calamities predicted to fall on the nation, would not be either so great or sudden as he had declared, and did not use the precaution of a speedy flight to save their lives, such might see in Lot's wife an example both of their sin and of their punishment.

*33. Whosoever shall seek to save his life, shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life, shall preserve it.* As, in the whole of his discourse, our Lord is speaking of the temporal calamities that were to befall the Jewish nation, his words in this 33d verse must be interpreted accordingly. Whosoever, in order to save his life, shall flee into the city, because it is strongly fortified and garrisoned, shall meet with the destruction which he is flying from; whereas, they shall be safe who flee into the open towns and defenceless villages, which in the opinion of many may be thought equal to a throwing away their lives. *34. I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. 35. Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. 36. Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.* The whole of this affair shall be directed in an especial manner by the providence of God, for the minds of your enemies shall be so over-ruled, that in cases where two persons are equally in their power, one of them shall be carried off, and the other left to make his escape. *37. And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord, shall all these things happen? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.* As eagles find out, and gather round a carcase, so wherever wicked men are, the judgments of God will pursue them; and particularly, in whatever part of the land any number of the unbelieving Jews are, there will the Romans, the executioners of the divine vengeance upon this nation, be gathered together to destroy them. The expression is proverbial, and will appear to have been beautifully applied, when it is remembered that the Romans bore in their standards the figure of an eagle; and that a certain kind of eagle called *περναετός*, mentioned by Aristotle, Hist. Animal. ix. 32. is found to feed on carcases.

Luke

and piety, was rendered still more conspicuous by the judgment inflicted on the faulty member of the family, who was cut off for her impiety. The interposition therefore of Providence in behalf of Lot and his children, was a proper contrast to the destruction of Sodom, and accompanied it with singular propriety, the one shewing the great regard which God hath for good men, while the other testified his extreme displeasure with sinners.



Luke xviii. 1. \* *And he spake a parable unto them, to this end, i. e. to teach them that men ought always (παρρη, frequently) to pray, and not to faint, και μη νικηθηναι, and not to tire or flag.* It sometimes happens, that after men have often prayed for any particular blessing, they desist, because God does not immediately grant them their petition. To shew them the evil of this, and † to recommend perseverance in prayer, our Lord spake the following parable, 2. *Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man.* This magistrate being governed by atheistical principles, had no inducement from religion to do justice; at the same time, being very powerful, he did not regard what men said or thought of him; wherefore, in all his decisions, he was influenced merely by passion or interest. 3. *And there was a widow in that city, and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.* This widow having no friends to assist her, could neither defend herself from injuries, nor obtain satisfaction for them when committed; hence in an instance where she was greatly oppressed, she found herself obliged to

\* Ver. 1. *And he spake a parable unto them, &c.]* ελεγει δε και παραβολην αυτοις. The particle δε, plainly implies that this parable has a relation to the preceding discourse, and was delivered at the same time. The evangelist says, it was designed to shew *that men ought always to pray, and not to faint*, that is, ought frequently to pray, for so the word παρρη signifies, John xviii. 20. The figure is carried still higher in the epithet given to the morning and evening sacrifices, which, because of their frequency, are called a continual burnt offering. And in allusion to this, men are directed to pray without ceasing, 1 Thess. v. 17. And Anna is said not to have departed from the temple, but to have served God with fastings and prayers night and day, Luke ii. 37. i. e. she attended constantly in the temple at the stated hours of prayer; for she came in while the parents of Jesus were presenting him to the Lord. It is plain, therefore, that the parable was spoken to recommend not continual praying in the strict sense of the words, but frequency, earnestness, and perseverance in the duty; especially when the subject of our prayers is a matter of a public nature, tending evidently to the glory of God, and to the good estate of his church on earth; and being delivered on this occasion, was designed to inspire the disciples with earnestness and perseverance in their prayers, particularly for the coming of the Son of man, to destroy the Jewish constitution, notwithstanding God should long defer the accomplishment of their desire. The coming of Christ to destroy the Jewish nation, is in this and other passages of scripture (Luke xxi. 28. Heb. x. 25. James v. 7. 1 Pet. iv. 7.) spoken of as a thing exceedingly to be wished for by the disciples in those days. The reason was, the Jews in every country being their bitterest persecutors, were the chief opposers of the Christian religion.

† To recommend perseverance in prayer.] Our Lord often, in the course of his ministry, recommended frequency, earnestness, and perseverance in prayer, not because the divine Being is tired out with our importunity, but because it is both an expression and exercise of our firm belief and confidence in his goodness, without which it would not be fit for God to bestow his blessings upon us, nor would we be capable of receiving and using them. Thus in his sermon on the mount, Matt. vii. 7.—11. § 26. Luke xi. 8. § 85. See the Paraph. on the latter of these passages, § 85.



to petition the judge for redress. 4. *And he would not for a while* : He was so addicted to his pleasures, that he would not put himself to the trouble of examining her cause, notwithstanding the grievous injustice that had been done to her, pleaded powerfully in her behalf : *But afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God nor regard man, 5. Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me* By importuning him incessantly, she forced him whether he would or no to do her justice ; for he thought with himself, Though I have no fear of God, nor regard to the happiness of others, I will avenge this widow merely to be rid of the troublesome feelings which the repeated representations of her distress raise in my mind. The sentiment painted in this parable is very beautiful ; namely, that if the repeated importunate cries of the afflicted do at length make an impression on the hearts even of men so wicked as to glory in their impiety, injustice, and barbarity, they will much more be regarded by God most gracious, who is ever ready to bestow his choicest blessings when he sees his creatures fit to receive them. Arguments of this kind taken from the feeble goodness, or even from the imperfections of men, to illustrate the superior and infinite perfections of God, were often made use of by Jesus, and with great success in working the conviction designed. Such appeals force their way directly into mens hearts, bear down all opposition, and make a lasting impression. Luke xviii. 6. *And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. 7. And shall not God avenge his own elect which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them ? Though God bear long with the wicked who oppress his elect, and seem deaf to the cries which they send up to his throne day and night for deliverance, the just view which he hath of their affliction, will in due time move him to punish severely their enemies.* It may be proper to observe here, that though the sentiment expressed be general, it was spoken with a particular reference to the destruction of the Jewish people described in the preceding

\* Ver. 5. *Weary me, υπαπισθη μου.* The word *υπαπισθη* properly signifies to *beat on the face*, and particularly under the eye, so as to make the parts black and blue. Hence it signifies to beat in general, as 1 Cor. ix. 27. In the passage under consideration, it has a metaphorical meaning, as all the translators acknowledge, though they seem to have missed the exact propriety of the metaphor. For *υπαπισθη* here signifies to *give great pain*, such as arises from severe beating. The meaning therefore is, that the uneasy feelings which this widow raised in the judge's breast, by the moving representations which she gave him of her distress, affected him to such a degree that he could not bear it, and therefore, to be rid of those feelings, he resolved to do her justice. The passage understood in this sense, has a peculiar advantage, as it throws a beautiful light on our Lord's argument, ver. 6, 7. and lays a proper foundation for the conclusion which it contains.



ceding prophecy, and which was to be brought on them by God for persecuting Jesus and his apostles. Luke xviii. 8. *I tell you that \* he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?* This question implies, that at the coming of Christ, to avenge and deliver God's elect, the faith of his coming should in a great measure be lost; accordingly, from 2 Pet. iii. 4. it appears that many infidels and apostates scoffed at the expectation of Christ's coming, which the godly in those days cherished: "Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."

\* Ver. 8. *He will avenge them speedily.*] Or rather *suddenly*, for so *ταχυ* may signify. Besides, scripture and experience teach, that in most cases punishment is not speedily executed against the evil works of evil men; but that when the divine patience ends, oftentimes *destruction overtaketh the wicked as a whirlwind*, Psal. lxxiii. 18,—20. and by its suddenness becomes the more heavy. Farther, the correction of the translation proposed, removes the seeming opposition between this clause and the end of the precedent verse, the reconciling of which has given rise to several strained criticisms, and I suppose to the various readings found there; not to mention that it agrees exactly with the subject in hand, the destruction of the Jewish nation having been represented by our Lord, in this very discourse, as what would be exceeding sudden and heavy. See Luke xvii. 24.

§ CII. *The parable of the Pharisee and the Publican, who went up to the temple to pray.* Luke xviii. 9,—14.

JESUS next addressed his discourse to such vain persons as were righteous in their own conceit, and despised others. But because things are sometimes best illustrated by their contraries, he placed the character of this sort of men beside that of the humble, describing the reception which each of them met with from God, in the parable of the Pharisee and the publican, who went up to the temple together at the hour of sacrifice, in order to pray. Luke xviii. 9. *And he spake this parable unto certain persons in his train, which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:* had an high opinion of their own sanctity, and on that account despised all other men as greatly inferior to them, both in righteousness, and in favour with God. 10. *Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, a person of the strictest sect of the Jewish religion, who made a great profession of piety, and who was esteemed by all a very holy man; the other a publican, a man who by reason of his occupation, was exposed to general odium as a very great sinner.* 11. *The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself:* The Pharisee having a very high opinion of his own sanctity, would not mingle with the crowd of worshippers in the temple, lest he should have been defiled by them; but he stood on a place by himself alone. This is plainly told in the Greek text: *ἰς τὸ φαρισαῖος εὐδὺς πρὸς αὐτὸν, ταύτην*



*καὶ προσευχόμενος.* *The Pharisee standing by himself, prayed these things.* He spoke them aloud, in the hearing of those who were in the temple at their devotions. Moreover, he shewed his pride and self-conceit, by standing as near the sanctuary, the place of the divine habitation, as he could, that the priests might hear him also, and that he might be at as great a distance as possible from the profane publican, who he observed was praying at the same time with himself. This circumstance of his standing near the sanctuary, indeed, is not mentioned directly, but it is implied in that which is told of the publican, ver. 13. viz. that he stood afar off. Here therefore the Pharisee prayed, giving God the honour of his supposed righteousness, in which he would have acted, so far well, had he really been possessed of any. *God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.* But this thanksgiving favoured of the rankest pride, being a praising of himself rather than of God; and such a praising of himself as implied the highest contempt of others, and particularly of his fellow-worshipper; for he did not simply thank God that he was possessed of this or that virtue, but forsooth, that he was not like other men, and particularly like the publican who was then addressing God. Moreover, he took care to do himself all manner of honour, by an exact detail of the sins to which other men were prone, but from which, in his own opinion, he was perfectly free; and of the duties which they neglected, but which he never failed to perform. Luke xviii. 12. *I fast twice in the week, and I give tithes of all that I possess.* The sins he mentioned being such as were generally charged on publicans, and the duties such as that sort of men were supposed to neglect, it shewed to what an intolerable pitch his vanity was grown, since it led him, even in his devotions, directly to insult his brethren, and proved that he possessed none of those virtues for which he very vainly returned God this solemn thanksgiving. Besides, his fasting twice in the week was a duty not prescribed by the law, as was likewise his paying tithes of all, according to the opinion of most casuists at that time, if, as is probable, he meant tithes of mint, anise, and cummin; a preciseness by which the men of his sect made themselves remarkable, Luke xi. 42. Wherefore the language of this part of his prayer was, I not only far excel other men in point of holiness, but I am even more righteous than the law requires. Thus did the proud Pharisee arrogantly insinuate, that he had laid God as it were under an obligation to him. How different was the behaviour of the publican! Impressed with a deep sense of his sins, he appeared so vile in his own sight, that he would not go up among the people of God, but stood afar off in the court of



the Gentiles\*, perhaps without the stone wall, called by the apostle the middle wall of partition, which Gentiles and unclean Israelites were not permitted to pass. See § 122. Here, with eyes fixed on the ground, smiting upon his breast, he by that action made a public acknowledgment of his great transgressions before all who were in sight of him, and in the bitterness of his soul earnestly cried for mercy. Luke xviii. 13. *And the publican standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, the habitation of the great Being whom he had offended, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.* He too, as well as the Pharisee, pronounced his devotions aloud. But in regard his prayer was a confession of his sin, his speaking it aloud proceeded not from vanity, but from the anguish of his soul. For instead of doing him honour, this prayer tended to abase him greatly; as he alleged no mixture of good to palliate the many evils of his past life, but openly acknowledged that he was a sinner, and sought refuge in the mercy of God, the alone foundation of his hope. And that he did not act the hypocrite in this, was evident from the place which he chose for his devotions, where there were few to behold him, from the melancholy of his countenance, and from his whole deportment. But humility and contrition being the dispositions of mind with which guilty creatures should come into the divine presence, the publican was a more acceptable worshipper than the Pharisee. 14. *I tell you this man went down to his house justified rather than the other:* that is, obtained the pardon of his sin, the blessing he had asked in his prayer, while the proud Pharisee, who justified himself, came away without being accepted; as is intimated in the comparison, which, according to the Hebrew idiom, often includes a negation. See Gen. xxxviii. 26. 1 Sam. xxiv. 17. When Jesus had finished the parable, he made an application of it to the persons for whose sake it was delivered, in his favourite and well known maxim, *for every one that exalteth himself, shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself, shall be exalted.*

This parable teaches us several important lessons: as, that the generality of men are great strangers to themselves; and ignorant of their own characters; that they oftentimes thank God in words

\* Salmasius indeed imagines that he was in the same court of the temple with the Pharisee, because the latter mentioned him in his prayer. If so, his standing afar off implies, that he came no farther than the gate or the extremity of the court, being so humble that he would not go near the Pharisee, whom he esteemed much more holy than himself. It is true Grotius and Cocceius affirm, that persons of his character, by the customs of the times, were obliged to keep at a distance, and that he did so, not out of humility, but necessity. Nevertheless, the text seems to contradict their notion, by mentioning the publican's standing afar off, along with the other undoubted instances of his humility, namely, that he would not even look up to heaven, but smote upon his breast, &c.



words for his benefits, while their hearts are by no means penetrated with any just sense of them ; that it is difficult to think of the sins we ourselves are free from, without censuring the persons who, in our opinion, are guilty of them ; that a man may be very ready to censure others, without ever forming a thought of reforming himself ; and that in a certain sense we may be clear of open and scandalous sins, while we are full of inward spiritual wickedness, pride, envy, malice, hypocrisy, and voluptuousness. To conclude, by propounding this parable of the Pharisee and the publican, immediately after that of the importunate widow, our Lord has taught us, that although our prayers must be very earnest and frequent, they should always be accompanied with the deepest humility ; because no disposition of mind is more proper for such weak and frail beings as men to appear with before the great God, than an absolute self-abasement.

§ CIII. *The Pharisees ask Christ's opinion concerning divorces.*  
Mark xix. 3,—12. Mark x. 2,—12.

JESUS was still in the town of Ephraim, when the Pharisees came and asked him whether he thought it lawful for a man to put away his wife for any cause whatever? Matt. xix. 3. *The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?* *κατὰ παντὶ αἰτίᾳ*, for any cause ; so the word *κατὰ* signifies, Rom. iii. 20. Gal. ii. 16. He had delivered his sentiments on this subject twice ; once in Galilee, Matt. v. 31. § 26. and again in Perea, Luke xvi. 18. § 96. It is probable therefore, that they knew his opinion, and solicited him to declare it, hoping it would incense the people, who reckoned the liberty which the law gave them of divorcing their wives, one of their chief privileges. Or, if standing in awe of the people, he should deliver a doctrine different from what he had taught on former occasions, they thought it would be a fit ground for accusing him of dissimulation. But they missed their aim entirely ; for Jesus, always consistent with himself, boldly declared the third time against arbitrary divorces, not fearing the popular resentment in the least.

The accounts which Matthew and Mark have given of this matter, when compared, seem to clash, though in reality they are perfectly consistent. The two historians indeed take notice of different particulars ; but these, when joined together, mutually throw light on each other, and give the reader a full view of the subject. According to both evangelists, the Pharisees came with an insidious intention, and asked our Lord's opinion concerning divorce. Mark x. 2. *And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? tempting him.* But the answer returned to this question is differently represented by the historians. Matthew says our Lord desired



desired the Pharisees to consider the original institution of marriage in paradise, where God created the human kind of different sexes, and implanted in their breasts such a mutual inclination towards each other, as in warmth and strength surpasses all the other affections wherewith he has endued them. And because they have such a strong love to each other, he declared that in all ages they should neglect every other tie, and among the rest that which binds them to their parents, and go together by marriage; and that male and female thus joined together in marriage, are by the strength of their mutual affection, no more twain but one flesh; that is, constitute only one person in respect of the unity of their inclinations and interests, and of the mutual power which they have over each others bodies, (1 Cor. vi. 16. vii. 4.) and that as long as they continue faithful to this law, they must remain undivided till death separates them. Matth. xix. 4. *And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that \* he which made them (the Creator) at the beginning, made them male and female?* 5. † *And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh.* From the original institution of marriage in paradise, and from the great law thereof declared by God himself on that occasion, it evidently appears that it is the strongest and tenderest of all friendships, a friendship supported by the authority of the divine sanction and approbation, a friendship therefore which ought to be indissoluble till death. 6. *Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder,* by unreasonable divorces. Thus, according to Matthew, our Lord answered the Pharisees question concerning divorce, by referring them to the original institution of marriage in paradise. But Mark says, he answered it by referring them to the Mosaical precept. Mark x. 3. *And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you?* The evangelists however may be easily freed from the imputation of inconsistency, by supposing that the answer in Mark was given after the Pharisees had, as Matthew informs us (ver. 7.) objected the precept in the law to the argument of divorce drawn from the original institution. Matt. xix. 7. *They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?* If divorce be contrary to the original institution of marriage, as you affirm, how came it that Moses has commanded us to give a bill of divorce, and to put

\* Ver. 4. *He which made them.*] Ο ποιων, the Creator, as ο πειραζων, Mat. iv. 3 signifies the tempter.

† Ver. 5. *And said, For this cause, &c.*] The words here ascribed to the Creator, are in the Mosaic history ascribed to Adam. But as the father of mankind spake on that occasion by inspiration, our Lord justly affirmed, that what he said was spoken by God.



put her away? The Pharisees, by calling the law concerning divorce *a command*, insinuated that Moses had been so tender of their happiness, that he would not suffer them to live with bad wives, though they themselves had been willing, but peremptorily enjoined that such should be put away. Mark x. 3. *And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you?* 4. *And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away.* Our Lord's question, mentioned by Mark, being placed in this order, implies that he wondered how they came to consider Moses' permission in the light of an absolute command, since it was granted merely on account of the hardness of their hearts. Matt. xix. 8. *He saith unto them, Moses, \* because of the hardness of your hearts, suffered you to put away your wives; but from the beginning it was not so.* And as unlimited divorces were not permitted in the state of innocence, so neither shall they be under the gospel dispensation. 9. † *And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and whoso marrieth her which is put away, doth commit adultery.* From our Lord's answer therefore it appears, that the school of Sammai taught the best morality on the subject of divorce; but that the opinion of the school of Hillel was more agreeable to the law of Moses on that point. See on Matth. v. 31. § 26. This 9th verse of Matthew seems to be parallel to the 11th verse of

\* Ver. 8. *Because of the hardness of your hearts.*] He meant their passionate stubborn temper, which was such, that had they not been permitted to divorce their wives, some would not have scrupled to murder them outright; others would have got rid of them by suborning witnesses to prove the crime of adultery against them; others would have reckoned it great mildness, if they had contented themselves with separating from their wives, and living unmarried. And thus God's design of multiplying his people exceedingly must have been frustrated, as the hated wives would either have been murdered, or denied the liberty of propagating by other husbands, a privilege that was secured to them by divorce. Moses therefore acted as a prudent lawgiver, in allowing other causes of divorce besides whoredom, because by admitting the less, he avoided the greater evil. At the same time, the Jews, whose hardness of heart rendered this expedient necessary, were chargeable with all the evils that followed it; for which reason, as often as they divorced their wives, unless in the case of adultery, they sinned against the original law of marriage, and were criminal in the sight of God, notwithstanding their law allowed such divorces.

† Ver. 9. *And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, &c.*] The practice of unlimited divorces which prevailed among the Jews, gave great encouragement to family quarrels, was very destructive of charity, and hindered the good education of their common offspring. Besides, it tended not a little to make their children lose that reverence for them, which is due to parents; as it was scarce possible for the children to avoid engaging in the quarrel. Our Lord's prohibition therefore of these divorces is founded on the strongest reason, and tends highly to the peace and welfare of society.



of Mark, having been spoken to the disciples in the house, as is probable from the unusual change of persons observable in this part of the discourse. Nevertheless, for the sake of representing the whole of our Lord's doctrine on this subject together, I have here brought in the ninth verse of Matthew immediately after the eighth. But what appears to be the true order, is preserved in the Harmony. There is this farther difference observable in the account which the evangelists give of our Lord's conversation with the Pharisees, that toward the conclusion thereof, Mark brings in the citation from Gen. ii. 24. concerning the original institution of marriage, wherewith Matthew says it was begun. Mark x. 5. *For the burdness of your heart, he wrote you this precept.* 6. *But, as I told you before, from the beginning of the creation, God made them male and female.* 7. *For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife ;* 8. *And they twain shall be one flesh ; so then they are no more twain, but one flesh.* 9. *What therefore God hath joined together, thus intimately by marriage, let no man put asunder by causeless divorce.* See on Matt. ver. 4. It seems this citation was twice produced. Nor is there any thing improper in such a repetition. For the Pharisees having objected Moses' precept, as inconsistent with the sense which Jesus put upon the passage in Genesis, it was very fit to repeat that passage, after he had confuted them, because by so doing he signified that its genuine and natural meaning could not possibly be affected by their frivolous objections. See an example of a like repetition, Matt. xv. 7. § 64.

The disciples it seems, were greatly surpris'd at Christ's decision concerning divorce ; for though they said nothing to him while the Pharisees were present, they did not neglect to ask him about it when they came to their lodging. 10. *And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same matter.* 11. *And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her.* From this general expression, the Papists infer that it is unlawful for a man to marry after having divorced his wife, even on account of adultery. But the parallel passage in Matthew shews plainly, that the clause, *except it be for fornication*, is omitted here. Or though that clause had not been there mentioned, the precedent context, and the subject spoken of, would necessarily have led the reader to supply this limitation. 12. *And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.* It was the custom of those times, for the women also to divorce their husbands. Matt. xix. 10. *His disciples say unto him, If th. case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry :* Since the law of marriage is so rigid, that unless the woman breaks the bond by going astray, her husband cannot dismiss her, but must



must bear with her, whether she be quarrelsome, petulant, prodigal, deformed, foolish, barren, given to drinking, or, in a word, troublesome by numberless vices, a man had better not marry at all. Jesus answered, It is not in every one's power to live continently; yet, if any man has the gift, whether by natural constitution, or by the injury of human force used upon him, which has rendered him incapable of the matrimonial union, or by an ardent desire of promoting the interests of religion; animating him to subdue his natural appetite, and enabling him to live in voluntary chastity, unencumbered with the cares of the world; such a person will not sin though he leads a single life. Matt. xix. 11. *But he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given. 12. For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mothers womb; and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men; and there be eunuchs, \* which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. † He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.* These words must not be referred to the clauses immediately preceding them, as if our Lord had meant to say, He that is able to become an eunuch by any of the ways I have mentioned, let him become one; for the second way, namely, through violence offered to mens bodies, is absolutely unlawful. But they must be referred to ver. 11. as is plain from the words themselves. In that verse Jesus had said, *All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given*, they cannot live without marriage chastely, unless

\* Ver. 12. *Which have made themselves eunuchs.*] That the amputation of the desire, not of the member, is meant in the phrase *made themselves eunuchs*, may be gathered from the other clauses of the passage. For there is mention made, first of *eunuchs, which were so born from their mothers womb*, plainly importing, that some are continent by natural constitution; next, we are told of eunuchs that are made so by men, i. e. through violence that has been offered to their bodies; last of all, there be who *have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake*, not by doing violence to themselves, but by a strong resolution of living continently in a state of celibacy, for the sake of promoting more effectually the interests of religion.

† Ibid. *He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.*] What is here said of a single life, is entirely perverted by the Papists, when they produce it to discredit matrimony, and exalt celibacy as the more perfect state. For on this very occasion, marriage is declared to be an institution of God. And lest any one might have replied, that it was a remedy contrived purely for the weakness of our fallen state, it is particularly observed, that it was an institution given to man in innocence. Wherefore, as the apostle tells us, marriage is honourable in all ranks and conditions of persons, provided the duties thereof are inviolably maintained. Besides, it is false to affirm that our Lord recommends celibacy. He only gives permission for it as a thing lawful, telling them that if they were able to live continently, they would not sin though they did not marry, especially as the times they lived in were times of persecution. In which light also the judgment of the apostle Paul is to be considered, when he declared it to be better for Christians, as matters then stood, not to marry, 1 Cor. vii. 26.



less they have the gift of continency. In the 12th verse he shews how that gift is obtained, mentioning three ways of it, then adds, *He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.* He that by any of the methods I have mentioned, is in a capacity of living chaste-ly, may continue unmarried without sin.

§ CIV. *Jesus blesses little children.* Matt. xix. 13,—15. Mark x. 13,—16. Luke xviii. 15,—17.

JESUS having, in the course of his ministry, performed innumerable cures in different parts of the country, certain persons who had young children, thinking perhaps that his power would be as effectual in preventing as in removing distempers, proposed to get their little ones secured, by his prayers, from all harms; accordingly, bringing them unto him, they desired him to put his hands on them\*, and pray for them. Matt. xix. 13. *Then were there brought unto him little children* (Luke, *infants*, τα βεβηνα) *that he should put his hands on them*, (Mark, *that he should touch them*, see on John xx. 17. § 150.) *and pray.* Or, the parents of these children believing Jesus to be a great prophet, imagined that his prayers would prevail with God to bestow on them spiritual blessings. Whatever was their design, the disciples mistaking it, were angry with them, and rebuked them. Mark x. 13. *And his disciples rebuked those that brought them.* When Jesus observed this, he was much displeased to find his disciples so defective in benevolence towards objects, whose innocence and helplessness in that tender age, entitled them to great affection from persons of riper years. He ordered them, therefore, to let the children be brought to him, 14. *But when Jesus knew it, he was much displeased*, (Luke, *Jesus called them unto him*) *and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God*, (Matt. *heaven*). The church of God on earth, and his kingdom in heaven, is composed of persons who resemble little children in their dispositions. See on Matt. xviii. 2. § 74. Because Luke says, *he called the children unto him*; also because of the exhortation which Jesus gave his disciples to resemble these children in their dispositions, it would appear that they were not mere infants, but children who could walk. The disciples having expressed some dissatisfaction at his doctrine concerning divorce, we may suppose Jesus took this opportunity to inform them again, that unless they possessed the humility, meekness, and docility of children, they should not enter into the kingdom of God. Luke xviii. 17. *Verily, I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God, i. e. the doctrines thereof, as a little child, shall in nowise enter therein.*

\* The imposition of hands was a ceremony with which the ancient prophets always accompanied their prayers in behalf of others. See Gen. xlviii. 14. Numb. xxvii. 18. 2 Kings v. 11. Matt. ix. 18.



is. To conclude, though the little ones could not profit by his instructions, yet being capable of his good wishes, he took them up in his arms, and with his usual benevolence, blessed them, and departed. Mark x. 16. *And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.* The imposition of hands being always accompanied with prayer, Matthew, who in the beginning of his account had joined the two together, says simply at the conclusion, that *he laid his hands on them, and departed.* It is probable therefore that Jesus both recommended the young ones to God in prayer, and blessed them himself.

§ CV. *Jesus leaves Ephraim. A young ruler desires to know what he should do to inherit eternal life; see § 82. 119. The difficulty of entering into the kingdom of heaven. The promise of the thrones is made the first time; see § 130. Self-denial is inculcated the third time; see § 71. 93. The parable of the labourers in the vineyard; Matth. xix. 16,—30. xx. 1,—16. Mark x. 16,—31. Luke xviii. 18,—30.*

THE passover at which our Lord was to suffer approaching, he left Ephraim, and went for Jerusalem by the way of Jericho. Soon after his departure, a ruler of the synagogue, or member of the sanhedrim, for the original word signifies both, came running to him by the way, and kneeling down before him, asked him, What he should do to obtain eternal life? Mark x. 16. *And when he was gone forth into the way, 17. There came one running,* (Luke, *τις ἀρχαι, a certain ruler*). He expected to have found him in the city of Ephraim; but when he understood that he had just left the place to go to Jerusalem, he ran after him, and coming up with him, he *kneeled to him*, in token of respect, and *asked him, Good master*, or, as the words *αγαθε διδάσκαλε* might better be rendered, *Good teacher*, or *Infallible doctor*, (see on Matt. xxiii. 7,—10. § 121.) *what shall I do* (Matt. *what good thing shall I do*) *that I may inherit* (Matt. *have*) *eternal life?* This young ruler in his address pretended to do great honour to Jesus, by kneeling to him, and giving him the title of infallible, and asking him such an important question, with an air as if he would have acquiesced in his decision, whatever it might be. Nevertheless, the whole was a piece of hypocrisy. For he was so far from believing Jesus to be a teacher from God, or infallible, that he does not seem to have been persuaded of his divine mission, as is evident from the disposition with which he received our Lord's counsel, "Sell that thou hast, and give to the poor." Jesus therefore first of all rebuked him for the flattery and falsehood of his address. 18. *And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good teacher, there is none good, i. e. infallible, but one, that is God; ὁδὲς ἀγαθός, οὐ μὴ ἐγώ, ὁ Θεός, there is none infallible but God only; for so οὐ μὴ ἐγώ, ὁ Θεός is translated, Mark ii. 7.—There*



is no teacher good or infallible but God, or those by whom God delivers his will to men; why therefore dost thou use such a title in speaking to one whom thou dost not believe to be commissioned by God? However, because he had expressed a desire of knowing the way to eternal life, and possessed some virtuous dispositions, Jesus answered his question, by directing him to keep the commandments of the second table of the law, which he mentioned on this occasion, not because they are of greater importance than the precepts of the first, but because there is a necessary connection between the duties of piety towards God, and of justice, temperance, and charity, towards men, and because these latter are not so easily counterfeited as the former; see on Matt. xxv. 35. § 123. Matt. xix. *But if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.* 18. *He saith unto him, Which?* Jesus said, *Thou shalt do no murder, thou shalt not commit adultery,* (see on Matt. v. 21,—32. § 26.) *thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness.* 19. *Honour thy father, and thy mother,* (see on Mark vii. 10. § 64.) *and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;* (see on Matt. xxii. 39. § 119. Mark, *Defraud not.*) 20. *The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept \* from my youth up, what lack I yet?* I have practised all these things from my childhood; pray is there any thing else necessary to render me perfect, in which I am deficient? No doubt the ruler understood these commandments in the lax sense which the doctors put upon them, and which our Lord reprehended in his sermon on the mount; consequently the character he gave of himself might be just. For though he was not a person of the highest probity and virtue, he may have maintained a fair character to the view of men. And as he had acquired that character amidst the temptations of youth, and wealth, and greatness, he was so far praise-worthy, and upon that account might be loved by Jesus. Or he may have been loved by him on account of the sweetness of his disposition, visible even in his countenance; a thing amiable, though found in a character tainted with pride and the love of the world. And to this the words of the evangelist seem best to agree. Mark x. 21. † *Then Jesus beholding him, loved him.* But notwithstanding the young ruler had

\* Ver. 20. *From my youth up, &c.*] *Ex naratos* here should be translated, *from my childhood*; for he is said to have been but a young man. Matt. xix. 20.

† Mark x. 21. *Then Jesus beholding him, &c.*] This sentence seems to be strained by De Dieu, who, because Psal. lxxviii. 36. *συνεπαινεσαν αὐτον οἱ σαρματι αὐτου*, signifies, they praised or flattered him with their mouths, would have *συνεπαινεσαν αὐτον* in the evangelist translated, *he praised him*, viz. ironically, knowing him to be a covetous worldly minded man. Falsinus thinks the meaning is, that he praised him seriously for the pains he had taken to obey the law: Boissus, that he treated him gently, and did not deal roughly with him.



had maintained a fair character, and was blessed with a lovely sweetness of disposition, he was not only puffed up with an high opinion of his own righteousness, but altogether faulty in respect of his affection to sensual enjoyments ; a sin which perhaps had escaped his own observation. Wherefore Jesus, willing to make him sensible of the secret sore of his mind, touched it gently. To shew him that he lacked a great deal still, and had by no means arrived at that pitch of virtue which he boasted, but was worldly-minded in a great degree, Jesus required him to sell his estate, to distribute the price of it to the poor, and to become a preacher of the gospel, promising him a much greater estate in return. This the ruler could not refuse to do, if he was the good man he pretended to be, seeing he had in words acknowledged Christ's divine mission, and had desired to know what more, besides obedience to the moral law, was necessary to render him perfect in goodness. Matt. xix. 21. *Jesus said unto him, (Luke, Yet lackest thou one thing, in reproof of his boasting speech, "What lack I yet?") \* If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast,* (Mark,

\* Ver. 21. *If thou wilt be perfect. &c.]* On this subject it is proper to observe, that the terms of salvation here settled, are not different from those mentioned elsewhere in scripture. For though faith is declared by our Lord himself to be the condition of salvation, it is such a faith as either proceeds from, or influences to the universal righteousness here described : *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.* Moreover, the Christian religion being from God, is established upon such solid evidences, that every virtuous person to whom it is offered, will receive it with pleasure. And if any man refuse it, his infidelity can be owing to no other cause but this, that his deeds are evil. So our Lord himself says expressly, John iii. 19. And, therefore, in returning a general answer concerning the terms of salvation, Jesus fitly directed this ruler first of all to a sincere, constant, and universal obedience. And when he replied, that he had arrived at that already, and desired to know if he lacked any thing more, namely, to render him perfectly good, our Lord, who knew that he was not thoroughly tinged with the principles of virtue, required him to become his disciple, which, as he had acknowledged his divine mission, he could not refuse to do, if he was the man he pretended to be ; assuring him, that by this course alone he would *be perfect*, i. e. demonstrate that he was really possessed of the virtues he laid claim to. At the same time, he let him know, he could not be his disciple, and much less a preacher of the gospel, without renouncing his worldly possessions ; because, as matters then stood, the very profession of his religion, and much more the preaching of it, would infallibly expose him to the loss of his estate. Here therefore our Lord has declared, that all men to whom the gospel is offered, must believe it, and make profession of it, else they cannot be saved ; and that true virtue, wherever it subsists, necessarily leads men to this belief and profession. But he by no means says, that Christians must sell their goods, and give them to the poor. An entire renunciation of the world was necessary indeed in the first ages, when the profession of Christianity, but especially the preaching of it, exposed men to persecution and death ; which was the reason that Jesus mentioned it to the ruler as his indispensable duty, especially as he aimed at acquiring the highest degree of goodness. But now that the Christian religion is established by law in many



(Mark, *whatsoever thou hast*. Luke, *all that thou hast*) and give (Luke, *distribute*) to the poor, (see Luke xii. 33. § 88.) and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: shalt have a much more valuable treasure in the life to come, than that which I advise thee to part with now. Throw away then that load of riches with which thou art cumbered, and come (Mark, *take up the cross*. See on Luke ix. 23. § 71.) and follow me: become my disciple, and a preacher of the gospel. When the ruler heard that this was necessary to render him perfect in goodness, the point which he pretended to aim at, he was greatly disconcerted; insomuch, that, without making any reply, he went away very sorry; for he had a great estate which he would by no means part with. Matt. xix. 22. *But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful*, (Mark, *He was sad at that saying, and went away grieved*. Luke, *He was very sorrowful*), for he had great possessions: (Luke, *he was very rich*.) From the circumstance of his being called a young man, it is conjectured by some, that this ruler was unmarried, on which account our Lord's command was less grievous to him than if he had had a wife and children.

The behaviour of this ruler affording a melancholy example of the pernicious influence of riches, Jesus thought fit to caution his disciples against the love of them, by declaring with what difficulty rich men become his disciples. The difficulty was next to an impossibility, because rich men commonly *trust in their riches*, that is to say, place their happiness in the enjoyments which their riches procure for them; and consequently could not easily become his disciples, at least in those early days, when the profession of the gospel exposed men to so much persecution. Luke xviii. 24. *And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said*, (Mark, *Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples*) *How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God?* Matt. xix. 23. *Verily I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven*. Mark x. 24. *And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God?* Rich men, having ever obtained all the necessities and superfluities of life by means of their riches, they are apt to consider them as the sources of their happiness, and to depend upon or trust in them as such, forgetting altogether their dependence on God; see Luke xii. 15. § 88. xvi. 25. § 96. It is otherwise with the poor. They are exposed to manifold afflictions, and labour under the pressure of continual wants. These serve to convince them of the vanity of the

many countries, all that our Master requires of us is, that we be in constant readiness to part with the world, and that we actually do so when God in his providence calls us thereto. See on Luke xiv. 33. § 93.



the world, and to put them in mind of their dependence upon God; at the same time, the unexpected deliverances and supplies which they meet with, rivet the idea more firmly. Wherefore, in the very nature of things, the poor are nearer to the kingdom of God than the rich; and if the latter, yielding to the temptations of their state, trust in their riches, words can scarce be invented strong enough to paint the difficulty of bringing them to that virtuous temper of mind, which will qualify them for the kingdom of God. 25. \* *It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle*, (a common proverb among the Jews to express the great difficulty of a thing) *than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God*. The disciples, who were following their Master in expectation of becoming both great and rich, were exceedingly astonished when they heard him declare that it was next to impossible for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. They thought, that if the rich and the great could not enter his kingdom, he never could have any kingdom at all; and therefore they asked one another with great surprise, "Who then can be saved?" 26. *And they were astonished out of measure*, (Matt. *When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed*) *saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?* But Jesus, who spake chiefly of rich men entering into his kingdom on earth at that particular season, replied in return to their private discourses, that though it was impossible for men, by any art of persuasion which they were possessed of, to prevail with the rich to become his subjects at the expence of their estates, it was not impossible for God to do it. 27. *And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible.* (Luke, *The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.*) The energy of the divine grace is able to make a man despise the world with all its pleasures, when the eloquence and persuasion of his fellow-men are not able to do it. Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus, Joanna, the wife of Chusa, Herod's steward, and Manen, Herod's foster-brother, were remarkable instances of this triumphant power of grace.

This answer, however, did not satisfy the disciples, who no doubt had often thought with pleasure on the honours and profits

\* Ver. 25. *It is easier for a camel, &c.*] Without doubt these strong expressions, in their strictest sense, must be understood of the state of things at that time subsisting. Yet, in some degree, they are applicable to rich men in all ages. The reason is, riches have a woeful influence upon piety in two respects: 1. In the acquisition; for not to mention the many frauds and other sins that men commit to obtain riches, they occasion an endless variety of cares and anxieties, which draw the affections away from God. 2. They are offensive to piety in the possession; because if they are hoarded up, they never fail to beget covetousness, which is the root of all evil; and if they are enjoyed, they become strong temptations to luxury, and drunkenness, and lust, and pride, and idleness.



sits of the great offices which they expected to enjoy in his kingdom. Among the rest Peter was much disappointed, finding that his stewardship ~~was~~ to be of little service to him, the office he supposed his Master had promised him under the metaphor of "the keys of the kingdom." Wherefore, addressing Jesus in name of the rest, he begged him to consider, that his apostles had all done what the young ruler refused to do; had left their relations, their employments, and their possessions, on his account. And since he was pleased to tell them, that rich men could not enter into his kingdom, which was the same thing as to tell them there would be no kingdom, he desired to know what reward they were to have. Matt. xix. 27. *Then answered Peter, and said unto him, (Mark, Then Peter began to say unto him) Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?* It seems Peter thought their labour was lost, because they were to have no recompence on earth. Jesus replied, that they should certainly have a peculiar reward, even in this life; because immediately after his resurrection, when he ascended the throne of his mediatorial kingdom, he would advance them to the high honour of *judging the twelve tribes of Israel*; that is, of ruling his church and people, of which the twelve tribes were a type. 28. *And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me in the regeneration, (παλιγγεννησια) you, who have left all and followed me, in order to assist me in accomplishing the creation of the new heavens and the new earth, predicted Isaiah lxxv. 17. \* when the Son of man shall sit in the*

\* Ver. 28. *When the Son of man, &c.*] In the seventh chapter of Daniel, the prophet speaking of the election of Messiah's kingdom, says, verse 9. *I beheld till the thrones were set (not cast down, as it is in our translation) and the Ancient of days did sit, namely, on one of the thrones that were set.* 13. *And behold one like the Son of man came to the Ancient of days while he sat on his throne, and they brought him near before him, and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom.* By the kingdom that was given to the Son of man, the prophet meant his mediatorial kingdom; and by the glory, his being seated beside the Ancient of days on one of the thrones mentioned, ver. 9. in testimony of his exaltation to that kingdom. The throne of his glory, therefore, which our Lord speaks of in the text, is the throne of his mediatorial kingdom, called the throne of his glory, in allusion to the representation which Daniel had given of it. In this kingdom, the apostles likewise were to be seated on thrones, and to judge the tribes; that is, were to be next to Messiah in dignity and office; his ministers, by whom he was to subdue and govern his church. Luke xxii. 28. § 130. we find this promise repeated to the disciples in words still more full to the same purpose. *Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations, answering to what is here termed, a following him in the regeneration. and I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me.* The kingdom which the Father bestowed on Jesus as the reward of his humiliations, was his mediatorial kingdom, (Phil. ii. 9.) not the happiness of heaven, which he enjoyed from eternity. Wherefore, the kingdom which he bestowed on his apostles as the peculiar reward of their services,



*the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones \* judging the twelve tribes of Israel.* He spake next of the rewards which his other disciples should receive, both in this life and in that which is to come. Matt. xix. 28. *And (Mark, Jesus answered and said, he likewise returned this answer, Verily I say unto you) every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake (Mark, and the gospel): Our Lord is not here speaking of such as have actually separated themselves from the persons, and parted with the possessions here mentioned; for if that had been his meaning, he would not have said that wives and children were to be forsaken, having himself on a former occasion expressly prohibited divorce on any account except fornication. But he is speaking of those, who for his sake and the gospel's, have renounced the pleasures and satisfactions which relations and possessions usually afford; see on Luke xiv. 33. § 93.—*  
*shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life, al-*  
*luding*

vices, being of the same kind with his own, was nothing else but the authority which they enjoyed next to him in the gospel-dispensation. *That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom.* This expression is evidently metaphorical, and signifies, that they were to share with him in the honours and pleasures of his high dignity, *and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.* As their eating and drinking at his table does not imply any single act, but a continuation of enjoyment, so their sitting on the thrones judging, cannot signify their being assessors to Christ in the one act of passing sentence upon the tribes; it rather implies a continuation of action, viz. in their giving laws to the converted tribes, by the gospel which they preached to them. See the following note.

\* Ver. 28. *Judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*] According to the common interpretation of these words, they relate entirely to the other life; implying, that at the general judgment the apostles shall assist Christ in passing sentence upon the Israelites. Yet this explication may justly be disputed; because the promise thus understood, would make the apostles very much inferior to all other saints, of whom it is said expressly, that they shall judge the world, and not the world only, but the angels also, 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3. Besides, the promise, in the ordinary sense of it, is not applicable to Judas at all, who being a bad man, cannot be supposed capable of the dignity of Christ's assessor at the general judgment. In the Hebrew language, *to judge*, signifies to rule or govern. Thus, Judges xii. 7. *Jephtha judged Israel twelve years.* 1 Sam. viii. 5. *Make us a king to judge us, like all the nations.* Wherefore, by the apostles sitting on thrones judging the tribes, may be understood their ruling the Christian church, of which the Jewish was a type, by the laws of the gospel, which their Master inspired them to preach, and by the infallible decisions relative to faith and manners, which he enabled them to give in all difficult cases.

Such seems to have been the true nature of the dignity which Jesus now promised to his apostles. However, as they had always been accustomed to look on Messiah's kingdom as a secular empire, they would naturally interpret their *sitting on thrones*, and *judging the tribes*, of their being made chief magistrates in Judea under their master; and would from thence take courage again, after having been greatly dispirited by the declaration which Jesus had made, concerning the impossibility of rich men entering into his kingdom.



luding to the ruler's expression, "What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" Mark expresses the promise more fully, *x. 30. He shall receive an hundred fold now in this time, (Luke, manifold more in this present time) houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come everlasting life*: They who have forsaken all for my sake shall be no losers in the issue; because God, who designs to admit them into heaven, will give them the comforts necessary to support them in their journey thither, and will raise them up friends, who shall be as serviceable to them as their nearest kindred, whom they have forsaken. By the special benignity of his providence, they shall have every thing valuable that relations or possessions can minister to them, and besides, shall have persecutions, whose heat will nourish virtues in them of such excellent efficacy as to yield them, even in this present world, joys an hundred times better than all earthly pleasures; so that they shall be fed by the bread of sorrows. But above all, in the world to come they shall have everlasting life. Their afflictions contributing to the growth of their graces, which are the wings of the soul, they shall in due time be raised on them even up to heaven, leaving all sorrows behind them, and shall fly swiftly into the bosom of God, the fountain of life and joy, where they shall have full amends made them for all the evils they have undergone on his account. Thus, many who in the eyes of their fellows, are last in this life, by reason of their afflictions, mortifications, and self-denial, are really first, not only in point of future reward, but even in respect of present satisfaction. *Matt. xix. 30. But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first.* These words were spoken also with a view to keep the disciples humble after their imaginations had been warmed with the prospect of their reward. For in all probability, they interpreted the promise of the thrones so as to make it refer to the highest offices in the temporal kingdom, the offices of greatest power, honour, and profit in Judea, and supposed that the other posts which were to be occupied at a distance from Messiah's person, such as the government of provinces, the generalship of armies, &c. would all be filled by their brethren Jews, to whom of right they belonged, rather than to the Gentiles. Nay, it was a prevailing opinion at this time, that every particular Jew whatever, the poorest not excepted, would enjoy some office or other in the vast empire which Messiah was to erect over all nations. In this light Christ's meaning was, Though you may imagine, that you and your brethren have a peculiar title to the great and substantial blessings of my kingdom which I have been describing, the Gentiles shall have equal opportunities and advantages for obtaining them; because they shall be admitted to all the privileges of the gospel, on the same footing with you Jews; nay, in point



point of time they shall be before you ; for they shall universally embrace the gospel before your nation is converted. Rom. xi. 25, 26.

This doctrine Jesus illustrated by the parable of the householder, who hired labourers into his vineyard, at different hours, and in the evening gave them all the same wages, *beginning from the last unto the first* \*. The true scope therefore of the parable is to shew, that the Jewish nation, who of all people were first in respect of external privileges, and particularly in respect of the offer, should be last in receiving the gospel. And that when they did receive it, they should enjoy no higher privileges under that dispensation, than the Gentiles who were called at the eleventh hour. The application of the parable suggests this interpretation, " So the last shall be first, and the first last ; for many be called, but few chosen." The vineyard signifies the dispensations of religion in general, which God gave to mankind in the different parts of the world. The hiring of the labourers early in the morning, represents that interposition of providence by which the Jews then alive were born members of God's church, and laid under obligations to obey the law of Moses. Matt. xx. 1. *For the kingdom of heaven (the Master of the kingdom of heaven) is like unto a man that is an householder (οικειστης, the master of a family) which went out early in the morning to hire labourers*

\* Many indeed imagine our Lord's design in the parable was to teach us, that God converts some in childhood, some in youth, some in their riper years, some in the decline of life, and some in old age. But had this been his meaning, he could not have said at the conclusion of it, *Many be called, but few chosen*. For according to that interpretation, the calling of the labourers signifying conversion, all who are called must necessarily be chosen. Farther, in the parable, the labourers received equal wages ; every man a penny. This must imply, that the rewards of the righteous shall be all equal ; whereas, from other passages of scripture we know, that every man shall receive according to his work, or in proportion to the degrees of grace he has been enabled to acquire. In the third place, the labourers who began early in the morning, murmured against the householder, for giving those who came at the eleventh hour as much wages as he had given to them. According to the common interpretation, this would lead one to think, that the saints in heaven envy one another's happiness ; whereas it is most certain, that all murmurings and grudgings are for ever banished from those blessed abodes. To conclude, when the householder went out at the eleventh hour, and asked the men that were in the market-place, why they stood there all the day idle ? they replied, *Because no man hath hired us*. But can it be said with truth of any Christian, that he is in the market place, or that he stands there idle because he is not hired ? All Christians are hired through the external call of the gospel and by making profession of Christianity, have gone into the vineyard, so that it is plain they are idle there, if they be idle. These reasons, I think, prove that the parable of the labourers, cannot be understood of God's calling men to repentance at the different seasons of life. Its true meaning seems to be that given in the Paraphrase.



*bourers into his vineyard.* God's bestowing the gospel-dispensation upon mankind, and the preparations previous thereto, may be illustrated by an householder's sending labourers at different hours of the day to work in his vineyard. 2. *And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day.* (*denarius*, a denarius, equal to our sevenpence-halfpenny, and the common wages of a day-labourer in those times) *he sent them into his vineyard* to work, according as the steward or overseer should direct them. The hiring of the labourers at the subsequent third, sixth, and ninth hours, signifies the various interpositions of Providence, by which many of the Gentiles in the different ages of the world were converted, either in whole or in part, to the knowledge and worship of the true God, becoming, some profelytes of righteousness, others profelytes of the gate. 3. *And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the market-place,* where labourers usually waited, in order to be hired. 4. *And said unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right, I will give you. And they went their way.* 5. *Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise.* The invitation given at the eleventh hour, signifies God's calling the Gentiles in every country, by the light of nature, to live piously and wisely. 6. *And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and said unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle?* 7. *They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive.* The householder did not, in the bargain which he made with those whom he hired at the third, sixth, ninth, and eleventh hours, fix any particular sum as their wages; he only said he would give them what was right, that is, give them in proportion to the hours which they should work; therefore his bestowing on them a whole day's wages, was an act of generosity, especially to those who came at the eleventh hour. The labouring of those who began early in the morning, signifies their performing the various duties imposed by the law of Moses, the dispensation they were under, which, because it was a grievous yoke, obedience to its precepts was fitly expressed by bearing the heat and burden of a whole day. The labouring of such as were called at the subsequent hours, signifies the obedience which the profelyted Gentiles yielded to such precepts of the law as were obligatory on them. The labouring of those who were called at the eleventh hour, signifies the works of piety, justice, temperance and charity, imposed upon the heathens by the law of nature, the dispensation under which they lived, beautifully set forth by their labouring only one hour in the cool of the evening; their duty being light in comparison of what was required of the Jews. 8. *So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard said unto his steward, Call the labourers,*  
*and*



and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. 9. And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. The equal reward bestowed on all, the penny given to each labourer as his wages, signifies the gospel with its privileges and advantages, which they all enjoyed on an equal footing. The steward who called the labourers to receive this reward, represents the apostles and first preachers, by whom the gospel was offered to both Jews and Gentiles. And the rewards being first bestowed on the labourers who came at the eleventh hour, signifies that the idolatrous Gentiles and proselytes, should all enjoy the gospel with its privileges, before the Jewish nation was converted; the condition not of a few individuals, but of great bodies of men, being represented in the parable. It is true, the labourers who came in the morning are said to have received the penny. 10. But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more, and they likewise received every man a penny. Nevertheless, we cannot from hence infer that our Lord meant to say, they would embrace the gospel. On the contrary, they murmured against the householder, and in their passion threw the money down upon the ground, as appears from his ordering them to take it up. Matt. xx. 11. And when they had received it, they murmured against the good man of the house, 12. Saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have born the burden and heat of the day. 13. But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong; didst thou not agree with me for a penny? 14. And he saith, Take up that thine is, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee. 15. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own? Is thine eye evil because I am good? Seeing I have given thee the hire which I promised thee, thou hast no reason of complaint; and if I chuse to give unto those who came last into the vineyard, as much hire as I have given to thee, who can find fault with it? I own it is an act of generosity; but am I not free to bestow what is my own as I see proper? And because I am bountiful, shouldst thou be envious? This part of the parable, therefore, is a striking representation of God's goodness, in bestowing upon the Gentiles the gospel-dispensation in preference to the Jews themselves, and without subjecting them to the grievous burden of the Mosaic yoke. 16. So the last shall be first, and the first last; for many be called, but few chosen: a proverbial expression, which, as it is here implied, imports that the Jews should all be called by the apostles and first preachers to receive the gospel, they should have the gospel preached to them; but that few of them in comparison would obey the call, or become chosen servants, the generality of the nation remaining in infidelity and wickedness. Wherefore, this branch of the parable very fitly represents the pride



pride of the Jews in rejecting the gospel, when they found the Gentiles admitted to its privileges, without becoming subject to the institutions of Moses. (See Acts xxii. 21, 22. 1 Thess. ii. 16.) In the mean time, we must not urge the circumstance of the reward so as to fancy that either Jews or Gentiles merited the blessings of the gospel, by their having laboured faithfully in the vineyard, or having behaved well under their several dispensations. The gospel, with its blessings, was bestowed entirely of God's free grace, and without any thing in men meriting it. Besides, it was offered promiscuously to all, whether good or bad, and was embraced by persons of all characters. Only as the law of Moses was a school-master to bring the Jews to Christ, so the right improvement of the light of nature prepared the Gentiles for the reception of the gospel.

The conclusion of the parable deserves our attention, *many are called, but few chosen*: words of vast meaning and high importance, and therefore should often be meditated upon, that we may not content ourselves with having the offers of the gospel made to us, or even with being in the visible church of God, but may give all diligence to make our calling and election sure.

§ CVI. *Jesus foretells his own sufferings a sixth time*; see § 101. 125. *Also his resurrection a fifth time*; see § 73. 131. *His disciples strive for the chief posts a second time*; see § 74. 130. *He inculcates the necessity of humility.* Matth. xx. 17,—28. Mark x. 32,—45. Luke xviii. 31,—34.

SOME time after delivering the parable of the labourers in the vineyard, Jesus proceeded on his journey to Jerusalem, with an intention to celebrate the passover, and to suffer the things predicted concerning Messiah by the prophets. Mark x. 32. *And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them, and they were amazed, and as they followed, they were afraid.* The rulers at Jerusalem had issued out a proclamation against our Lord, immediately after the resurrection of Lazarus, and probably promised a reward to any that would apprehend him, John xi. 37. I suppose this was the reason why the disciples were astonished at the alacrity which their Master shewed in this journey to the capital city, and afraid while they followed him. They all expected indeed that the kingdom was immediately to appear, Luke xix. 11. But recollecting what had been said to them concerning the difficulty of rich mens entering into it, and comparing that declaration with the behaviour of the rulers, who had hitherto opposed and persecuted Jesus, they became very apprehensive of the dangers they should be exposed to at Jerusalem. In such circumstances, our Lord knew that a repetition of the prophecy concerning his own sufferings was proper; because it shewed the disciples that they were en-  
tirely



tirely voluntary. And as he told them expressly, that they had been predicted by the prophets, and consequently decreed of old by God, the opposition he was to meet with, though it would end in his death, instead of weakening their faith, ought to have increased it; especially as he informed them at the same time, that he would rise again the third day. Luke xviii. 31. *Then he took unto him the twelve, (Matt. the twelve disciples apart in the way) and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. Matt. xx. 18. And the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death. 19. And shall deliver him to the Gentiles. Luke xviii. 32. For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: 33. And they shall scourge him, and put him to death; and the third day he shall rise again; see on Matt. xii. 40. § 48. They shall mock him as if he was a fool, and scourge him as if he was a knave, and spit upon him to express their abhorrence of him as a blasphemer, and crucify him as a criminal slave. This prediction being built upon the ancient prophecies concerning Messiah, it certainly contained matter of great encouragement to the disciples, had they understood and applied it in a proper manner. Nevertheless, being ignorant of the scriptures, they had no conception of what he meant by the things which he said. 34. And they understood none of these things; and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.*

On this occasion the disciples shewed their ignorance of the prophecies, by an action which likewise discovered, in the clearest manner, the temper of mind they were in, and the motives from which they followed their Master. James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who seem to have fancied that by their Master's resurrection after his sufferings, was meant, his taking possession of the great empire which they believed he was come to erect, no sooner heard him mention his rising from the dead, than they came and begged the favour of him, that he would confer on them the chief posts in his kingdom. This they expressed by asking to be seated, the one on his right hand, the other on his left, in allusion to his late promise of placing the twelve apostles on twelve thrones to judge the tribes. See 1 Kings ii. 19. Mark x. 35. *And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto him, saying, Master, we would that thou shouldst do for us whatsoever we shall desire. 36. And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you? 37. They said unto him, Grant unto us, that we may sit one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left, in thy glory, (Mat. in thy kingdom.) Matthew expresses the matter thus; xx. 20. Then came to him the mother*



*mother of Zebedee's children, with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him, &c.* It seems this woman, whose name was Salome, (compare Matt. xxvii. 36. with Mark xv. 40.) was now in our Lord's train, having followed him from Galilee with other pious women who attended him in his journeys, "and ministered unto him," (Mark xv. 40.) that is, supplied him with money, and took care to have him accommodated with lodging and other necessities. This attendance the mother of Zebedee's children could the more easily give, as her husband seems now to have been dead, and to have left her in good circumstances according to his station; for we learn from the gospels, that he had a boat of his own and hired servants. Salome therefore being particularly acquainted with our Lord, and having always shewed him great respect, thought herself entitled to distinguished favour; and on that account readily undertook, at the desire of her sons, to intercede with him in their behalf. Probably they seconded her, by speaking the words which Mark has ascribed to them. Ever since Christ's transfiguration, the two brothers had conceived very high notions of the glory of his kingdom, and it may be of their own merit also; because they had been admitted to behold that miracle. They formed the project therefore of securing to themselves the chief places by his particular promise, and embraced this as a fit opportunity of accomplishing their purpose. Matt. xx. 22. *But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of \* the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptised with the baptism that I am baptised with?* Ye are ignorant of the nature of the honour ye are asking. However, since ye desire to partake with me in my glory, I would know if ye be willing to share with me in my sufferings for the sake of the gospel? insinuating that the road to greatness in his kingdom, lies through the deep mire of affliction and persecution on account of truth. The two disciples, vehemently moved with the prospect of the dignities which they were aspiring after, replied without hesitation, that they were able to drink of his cup. *They say unto him, We are able.* They were willing to undergo any hardship with their Master, which he might suffer in the way to his kingdom. 23. *And he saith unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of my cup: (Mark, the cup that I drink of :) ye shall certainly share with me in my lot; † and*  
&c

\* Ver. 22. *The cup, &c.*] A man's cup, both in sacred and profane authors, signifies the portion of good or evil befalling him in this life. See Psal. lxxv. 9, 10.

† Ver. 23. *And be baptised, &c.*] This metaphorical sense of the word baptism, is derived from the figurative expressions of the Old Testament, in which afflictions are represented under the notion of great waters passing over and ready to overwhelm a person. In this view of the matter, James and John were baptized with Christ's baptism; for James was put



*be baptised with the baptism that I am baptised with, shall partake of my afflictions; but to sit on my right hand and on my left, \* is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father; or rather, It is not mine to give, except to them for whom it is prepared of my Father. I can give the chief places in my kingdom to none but to those, who, according to the immutable laws of my Father, are capable of enjoying them.*

The ambition of the two brothers raised the indignation of the rest to a great degree. It seems they overheard the conference; and being not only equally desirous, but in their own opinion equally deserving of the principal posts, they took it exceedingly amiss that Zebedee's sons should have been so arrogant. Matt. xx. 24. *And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren, (Mark, were much displeased with James and John).* Perhaps they expressed their resentment in words. Wherefore Jesus, solicitous to cure that pride which made some ambitious, and others jealous, called them unto him, and told them, that his kingdom was not, as they imagined, of the same nature with the kingdoms of the world; and that the greatness of his disciples was not the greatness of secular princes, which consists in reigning over others with absolute and despotic sway: 25. *But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, (Mark, they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles, exercise lordship over them) and they that are great (Mark, their great ones) exercise authority upon them* 26. *But it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be (Mark, shall be) your minister.* 27. *And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant, (Mark, servant of all).* 28. *Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.* The greatness of my disciples consists in doing men all the good they possibly can, by a continued course of humble laborious services, in

to death by Herod, Acts xii. 2. And though the account which some give of John's being cast into a cauldron of boiling oil at Rome has been called in question by many, it is not to be doubted that he had his share of the persecutions from which none of Christ's apostles were exempted. He was imprisoned and scourged by order of the council at Jerusalem, Acts v. 18.—40. and banished to the isle of Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ,\* Rev. i. 9.

\* Ver. 23. *Is not mine, &c.*] In the original, it is *οὐκ ἐστὶν μου δοῦναι, ἀλλ' ὡς προετοιμασμένον*, which should be translated, *It is not mine to give, unless to them for whom it is prepared of my Father; ἀλλὰ* being here put for *εἰ μὴ*, as it is also, Mark ix. 8. (See the Greek of Matt. xvii. 8.) He meant that it was not in his power to give the chief places to any but to them who are most eminent for their graces, particularly for their faith and fortitude; such only having a right to the chief places in the kingdom of heaven, according to the unalterable laws of the divine administration.



in imitation of me, your Master, whose greatness consists not in being ministered to by men, but in ministering to them as a servant, by healing the sick, feeding the hungry, instructing the ignorant, and laying down my life a ransom for the sins of many. This being the highest dignity in Christ's kingdom, he might well tell the two brothers that they did not know what they were asking, when they begged the honour of filling the highest station in it.

§ CVII. *Jesus, in his way to Jerusalem, cures two blind beggars near the city of Jericho* Matt. xx. 29,—34. Mark x. 46,—52. Luke xviii. 35,—43.

AT length Jesus and his disciples, with the multitude that followed, came to Jericho \*. Mark x. 46. *And they came to Jericho.* Near to this town our Lord cured two blind men that sat by the road begging, and who, while he was passing by, expressed their faith in him as Messiah. Luke xviii. 35. *And it came to pass, that as he was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the way-side begging* 36 *And bearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant; and they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.* Matthew and Mark affirm, that this transaction happened as Jesus departed from Jericho. Mark x. 46. *And*  
as

\* The city of Jericho, for greatness and opulence, was inferior to none in Palestine, Jerusalem excepted. It was beautified with a palace for the reception of the governor, if he chose to go thither, with an amphitheatre for public shows, and with an hippodrome for horse races. The city was pleasantly situated at the foot of that range of hills which bounded the Campus Magnus to the west; see § 14. The country around was the most fertile spot in Canaan, yielding, besides the necessities of life in great abundance, the best palms, also excellent honey, and the famed balsam-tree, the most precious production of the earth. The fruitfulness of this region was owing to various causes, and among the rest, to a fine spring, with which it was watered, and which anciently was sweetened by the prophet Elisha, who blessed the land likewise by God's command, with perpetual and extraordinary fruitfulness, 2 Kings ii. 18. The air here was exceedingly mild, for when it snowed in the other provinces of Palestine, and was so cold that they were obliged to make use of the warmest clothing, the inhabitants went about clad in linen only. Hence, as Josephus tells us, Bell. v. 4. the territory of Jericho was called *ἡμετέριον*, a heavenly country, resembling paradise for beauty of prospect, fertility of soil, and felicity of climate. The fountain that enriched this delightful spot, was so large as to deserve the name of a water or river, Josh. xvi. 1. and refreshed a plain of seventy stadia long, and twenty broad. But the excellency of its quality was visible in its effects; for it gladdened the whole tract through which it glided, and made it look like a garden, affording a prospect the more agreeable, as the neighbouring country was bleak and inhospitable. Jericho was 120 stadia, i. e. fifteen miles from Jerusalem, almost due east, the country between being mountainous; but from thence to the Jordan, which was at the distance of twenty stadia, or two miles and an half, and towards the Asphaltite lake, the land was flat and barren.



as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimæus, the son of Timeus, sat by the high-way side. Matt. xx. 29. \* And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude

\* Ver. 29. *And as they departed from Jericho, &c.*] Luke says the blind man was cured as our Lord drew nigh to Jericho, (ver. 35.) and before he passed through the town, chap. xix. 1. The other evangelists say the miracle was performed as he departed from Jericho. But their accounts may be reconciled three different ways.

First, Jesus arriving about mid-day, entered Jericho; and having visited his acquaintance, or done any thing else he had to do, returned in the evening by the gate through which he had gone in. As he was coming out, he passed by the beggars, and cured them. Next day he entered into and passed through Jericho in his way to Jerusalem. There is nothing improbable in this solution; for if our Lord was a night in that part of the country, he might spend it in some of the neighbouring villages rather than in the city, where he had many enemies. It may be objected, that Luke seems to say the miracle was performed as Jesus went toward Jericho, not as he was coming away; *ὡς πορεύετο εἰς τὴν Ἱερουσόλῃμ*. But if the opinion of Grotius, Le Clerc, and others, may be relied upon, the phrase *ὡς πορεύετο*, stands here for *ὡς ἔγγιζε* *ἤματι*, while he was near Jericho.

The second solution is as follows: The blind man of whom Luke speaks, may have cried for a cure as Jesus went into Jericho about noon, though he did not obtain it then. The multitude rebuked him, and Jesus passed, without giving him any answer, intending to make the miracle more illustrious. Towards evening, therefore, as he was returning, the blind beggar, who had cried after him in the morning, being joined by a companion, in the same unhappy condition with himself, renewed his suit, beseeching the Son of David to have mercy on them; the multitude, as before, rebuked them for making such a noise; but the season of the miracle being come, Jesus stood still, called them, and cured them. It may be objected, that Luke makes no distinction between the beggars calling to Christ in the morning, as he went into the town, and the cure performed in the evening, as he came out, but connects the two events, as if they had happened in immediate succession. The answer is, there are several undeniable examples of this kind of connection to be found in the sacred history, particularly in Luke's gospel, as has been shewed in the 3d Preliminary Observation.

The third solution of the difficulty is this: Jericho having been a flourishing city before the Israelites entered Canaan, must, in the course of so many ages, have undergone various changes from war and other accidents. We may therefore suppose that it consisted of an old and a new town, situated at a little distance from each other. On this supposition, the beggars, sitting on the road between the two towns, might be said to have got their cure either as Jesus departed from the one, or drew nigh to the other, according to the pleasure of the historians. The reader however must not look upon this as a mere supposition; for on examination, he will find the sacred history affording clear proofs of it. We are told (Josh. vi. 24.) that after the Israelites had sacked and burnt Jericho, Joshua, their general, adjured them, saying, (ver. 26.) *Cursed be the man before the Lord, that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho; he shall lay the foundation thereof in his first-born, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it.* Joshua's curse struck such a terror into the Israelites, that for the space of more than five hundred years, no man attempted to rebuild Jericho, till Hiel, the Bethelite, in the days of Ahab, brought it upon himself, by venturing to raise



*multitude followed him.* 30. *And behold \* two blind men sitting by the way side.* Luke xviii. 36. *And bearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant.* 37. *And they told him that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.* Mark x. 47. *And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, Jesus, thou Son of David, (Matt. O Lord, thou Son of David) have mercy on us.* This blind man being well acquainted with our Lord's fame, his name was no sooner mentioned, than he conceived hopes of obtaining a cure; and being deeply impressed with a sense of his own affliction, he cried out so vehemently, that the people in a passion rebuked him for making such a noise. 48. *And many charged*

this ancient city out of her ashes, 1 Kings xvi. 34. But although the old city lay thus in ruins for many ages, there was a town very soon built not far from it, to which they gave its name. For so early as Eglon's time we read of *the city of palm trees*, (Judges iii. 13.) a name peculiar to Jericho, on account of the fine palm-groves with which it was environed; Deut. xxxiv. 3. 2 Chron. xxviii. 15. Besides, we find Jericho, some time after this, expressly mentioned by name, being the town where David desired his messengers to tarry till their beards, which Haun, king of Moab, caused to be shaved, were grown. Wherefore, as there was a Jericho before Hiel rebuilt the ancient town which Joshua destroyed, it cannot, I think, be doubted, that from Hiel's days there were two cities of this name, at no great distance from each other, perhaps a mile or so. Besides, Josephus insinuates, that both subsisted in his time; for he says expressly, that the spring which watered the territory of Jericho, arose near the old town; Bell. v. 4. which see. Thus, therefore, we have an easy and perfect reconciliation of the seemingly contradictory accounts which the evangelists have given of our Lord's miracle on the blind men in this part of the country. But although there had been no hint in antiquity, directing us to believe that there were two cities of the name of Jericho, not far from each other, every reader must acknowledge, that to have supposed this, would have been sufficient to our purpose of reconciling the evangelists; because there are such towns to be met with in every country: a thing which of itself must have rendered the supposition not only possible, but probable. And I may venture to lay, that had two profane historians related any fact with the disagreeing circumstances found in the evangelists, the critics would have thought them good reasons for such a supposition, especially if the historians were writers of character, and had been either eye witnesses of the things which they related, or informed by the eye witnesses of them. To conclude, this instance may teach us never to despair of finding a proper and full solution of any imagined inconsistency, that is to be met with in the sacred history.

\* Ver. 30. *Two blind men, &c.*] Mark and Luke speak only of one blind man that was cured near Jericho. Matthew says there were two who had the blessing of sight conferred on them at that time. Augustine, de Conf. Evang. Lib. ii. No. 174. gives it as his opinion, that one of the beggars was more remarkable than the other, being the son of Timeus, who seems to have been a person of some distinction; and that, having fallen into poverty and blindness, he was forced to beg for his bread. He thinks this a good reason for his being mentioned particularly by one of the evangelists. It may be added, that he made himself remarkable by the extraordinary earnestness with which he cried. There are several other instances in the gospels, where one person only is mentioned, though there were two concerned in the matter narrated. See on Matt. viii. 28. § 32.



charged him (Luke, *They that went before, rebuked him. Matt. The multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace that he should hold his peace ; but he cried the more a great deal, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me* (Matt. *They cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David*). 49. *And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called* (Luke, *commanded him to be brought unto him*). He had passed by the blind men, and would not perform the miracle till they came to him, that by the manner of their walking, the spectators might be sensible they were really blind. Mark x. 49. *And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise, he calleth thee*. 50. *And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus*. When they came near, Jesus asked what it was that they were requesting with such earnestness. Perhaps some of his train imagined, that the beggars, like others who followed the same way of life, were feigning themselves blind to move peoples compassion ; and for that reason, expected they would have begged nothing but an alms. Wherefore, when they intreated him to bestow on them the more excellent charity of sight, it could not be doubted that they were blind. 51. *And Jesus answered and said unto him, (Luke, And when he was come near, he asked him, saying) \* What wilt thou that I should do unto thee ? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight* (Matt. *that our eyes may be opened*). Matt. xx. 34. *So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes*. Mark x. 52. *And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way, thy faith hath made thee whole*. Luke says, that at conferring the cure, *Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight, thy faith hath saved thee : i. e. the strong persuasion which thou entertainest of my divine power, makes thee fit to receive this cure which I now bestow on thee*. See 90-Mark ix. 23. § 73. *And immediately their eyes received sight, and*

\* Ver. 51. *And said, What wilt thou, &c.*] It is observable, that we never find Jesus bestowing an alms of money on any poor person falling in his way ; yet this is no objection against his charity. For if the person who addressed him was incapable of working for his own subsistence, by reason of bodily infirmity, it was much more noble, and much more becoming the dignity of the Son of God, to remove the infirmity, and put the beggar in a condition of supporting himself, than by the gift of a small sum to relieve only a present want, which would soon return. Such an alms being at best but a trifling and indirect method of helping them. On the other hand, if the beggars who applied to him were not in real distress, through want or disease, but under the pretence of infirmity and poverty, followed begging, as they deserved no encouragement, so they met with none from Jesus, who knew perfectly the circumstances of every particular person he conversed with. Besides, to have bestowed money on the poor, was not only beneath Christ's dignity, but having occasion to perform great cures on several beggars, it might have afforded his enemies a plausible pretence for affirming, that he bribed such as feigned diseases likewise to feign cures, of which they gave him the honour.



\* *and they followed him* (Mark, *in the way*) (Luke, *glorifying God*). The blind men travelled along with Jesus perhaps all the way to Jerusalem, being deeply affected with a sense of his power and goodness, and earnestly desirous to shew their gratitude, by declaring openly unto all the persons they met, what a great miracle Jesus had performed upon them. Besides, by following him in the road without any guide, they put the truth of the miracle beyond all suspicion. Accordingly, Luke tells us, that the people, when they saw what was done, were thankful to God for the mercy of the cure, and acknowledged the divine mission of the prophet who had performed it, and who, before the cure, had been addressed by the blind men as the Son of David or Messiah. Luke xviii. 43. *And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God.*

\* Ver. 34. *And they followed him.*] The allegorical reflection which Erasmus makes on this circumstance is beautiful. “Ita sanat animum cupiditatibus mundanis exæcatum suo contactu Jesus, et in hoc datur lumen, ut illius sequamur vestigia.” “Thus Jesus, by his touch, cures the mind that is blinded with worldly lulls, and gives light for this end, that we may follow his footsteps.”

§ CVIII. *Jesus, in his journey from Jericho to Jerusalem, visits Zaccheus the publican.* Luke xix 1.—10.

AFTER conferring sight on the beggars, Jesus entered Jericho, attended by the beggars, by his disciples, and by the multitude. He made no stay however in that town, because he hastened to be at Jerusalem eight or ten days before the passover, intending to preach and work miracles in the most public manner, under the eye of all the people, and of the grandees, whose resentment he was no longer afraid of, because his ministry had continued the determined time, and he was resolved to die at this passover. Luke xix. 1. *And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho.* 2. *And behold there was a man, named Zaccheus, which was the chief among the publicans, i. e. one of the principal tax-gatherers, (see on Mark ii. 14. § 34.) and he was rich.* 3. *And he sought to see Jesus who he was.* Having heard of our Lord's miracles, he had a great curiosity to see what sort of a person he was, *and could not for the press, because he was little of stature.* Jesus was now attended by a prodigious multitude. For the passover being at hand, the roads to Jerusalem were full of people, many of whom happening to meet with him, chose to travel in his company, that they might behold his miracles. *And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore-tree to see him; for he was to pass that way.* Zaccheus, it seems, was in Jericho when Jesus passed through it. This accounts for his running before the multitude on this occasion; for by the following verse it appears, that his house was farther on in the road to Jerusalem. His desire to see Jesus was increased, no doubt, by the account which  
he



he had received in Jericho of the miracle performed on the blind beggars ; for the news of so extraordinary a transaction would be quickly spread abroad. Luke xix. 5. *And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and saw him, and said unto him, Zaccheus, make haste, and come down ; for to-day I must abide at thy house.* Jesus had never seen him before, yet he called him by his name, and by what he said, insinuated that he knew his house was farther on in the road. 6. *And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully :* expressed his joy at the Lord's condescending to visit him, by shewing him all the marks of civility in his power. 7. *And when they saw it, when the multitude saw him enter the house of Zaccheus, they all murmured, saying that he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.* Perhaps they spake so loud that Zaccheus heard them, which was the reason that he justified himself before Jesus and his attendants, immediately upon their coming in. 8. *And Zaccheus stood, and said unto the Lord, \* Behold, Lord, the half of my goods,* probably he meant his income, *I give to the poor ; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation,* he meant unjust exaction of the taxes, for *ὑποφάρμακα*, as Heinsius has shewed, may very properly signify any kind of oppression, especially under the pretence of law ; see LXX. Eccles. iv. 1. v. 8.—*I restore him four-fold.* & One great reason of the odium which followed the occupation of a publican, was the injustice which such persons practised in the exercise of their office. Wherefore, the declaration which Zaccheus now made, was a fit vindication of his own

\* Ver. 8. *Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor ; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.* We may either take this as a declaration of what Zaccheus had been in use to do, agreeably to the force of his expressions, which run in the present tense, *I give, I restore* ; not in the future, *I will give, I will restore* ; agreeably likewise to the testimony which Jesus honoured Zaccheus with, that he was a son of Abraham ; or we may take it as a declaration of his resolution, with respect to his future conduct, dating his conversion from this period. For even in this light, the declaration clears his character from the aspersion which the multitude charged him with, on account of his occupation, and shews the unreasonableness of their murmuring against Jesus, because he went into the house of a tax-gatherer. The reason is plain ; he who, after giving the half of his goods to the poor, and making restitution of fourfold for all the injuries he committed, had a competency wherewithal to support himself and his family, must not have been guilty of many deliberate acts of injustice. The evils of this kind he was chargeable with in the prosecution of his business, must have been the effects of ignorance and human frailty, rather than of a settled wicked disposition ; and therefore he must have been a person of great probity and worth. Accordingly Jesus confirmed the account which Zaccheus gave of himself, by declaring that he was a son of Abraham, not in respect of his descent only, but in respect of his faith and holiness, *Salvation is come to this house, forasmuch as he also is the son of Abraham.* That Zaccheus was a Jew appears from his name, which is the same with Zaccai. Ezra ii. 9,



own character, and shewed how unreasonable the prejudices were which the multitude entertained against him on account of his profession. Luke xix. 9. *And \* Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is the son of Abraham.* Jesus, who knew the hearts of all men, confirmed the truth of what Zaccheus said concerning himself, by declaring in the hearing of all his guests, that he was the son of Abraham in respect of his faith and holiness, as well as in respect of his descent. Besides, as what Zaccheus said related to the execution of his office, it must have been a thing known to all who lived in that part of the country; and therefore his speaking of it so publicly, was a great proof of his sincerity. Farther, to convince the people that our Lord acted agreeably to his character in keeping company with publicans and sinners, he told them; that the great design of his coming into the world, was to save such. 10. *For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost:* alluding to the parables of the lost sheep, lost money, and lost son, which he had lately delivered, to prove how agreeable it was to reason, to the duties of his mission, and to the will of God, that he should keep company with the worst of sinners, in order to recover them unto God, their rightful owner. And therefore, though Zaccheus had been really as bad a man as the multitude took him, and his vocation bespoke him to be, Jesus was in the exercise of his duty, when he went to lodge with him.

§ CIX. *The parable of the nobleman's servants.* See § 124.  
Luke xix. 11,—28.

LUKE XIX. 11. *And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.* Because his followers were accompanying him to the royal city, in expectation that the kingdom of God would immediately appear, and with a resolution to assist him in erecting it, he spake a parable, wherein he shewed them their duty, described the true nature of the kingdom of God, and taught them, that it was not immediately to appear. The evangelist says, that, “As they heard these things,” namely, that salvation was come to Zaccheus’ family, “he added and spake a parable.” From this we gather, that he spake the parable in Zaccheus’ house. 12. *He said*

\* Ver. 9. *Jesus said unto him.*] The correction of the translation here, proposed by Ellner, is just; *ἔτι πρὸς αὐτόν, Jesus spake concerning him to the guests,* as is evident from the speech itself. *Πρὸς* in this signification we have, Luke xx. 19. *They knew that he had spoke to us parable, πρὸς αὐτούς, of them.* Also, Heb. i. 7. *Καὶ πρὸς τὰς ἀγγέλους, and of the angels he says.* We have it likewise, Heb. iv. 13. *πρὸς ὃν ἡμεῖς ὁ λόγος, of whom we speak.*



said therefore, a certain nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. A certain king's son, in order to be confirmed in his father's kingdom, went into a far country, to do homage unto a more powerful potentate, of whom he held it as a vassal. The allusion here, is to a custom which prevailed greatly in our Lord's time among the princes of the east. Before they ventured to ascend the throne, they went to Rome, and solicited the emperor's permission, who disposed of all the tributary kingdoms as he saw fit. The meaning of this part of the parable is, that before Jesus set up his kingdom he was to die, and to ascend into heaven. 13. *And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.* Before he departed, he called his ten household slaves, (*δουλοι οἱ αὐτου*) and gave each of them a sum of money to be employed in trade till he should return. By the ten household slaves, we are to understand chiefly the apostles and first preachers of the gospel; to whom Jesus gave endowments fitting them for their work, and from whom he expected a due improvement of these endowments, in the propagation of the gospel. This was their particular duty in the erection of the kingdom of God, about which they were now so solicitous. 14. *But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us:* His natural subjects hated him without a cause, as appears from the message which they sent to the potentate, from whom he sought what in latter times has been called investiture. For in that message they alleged no crime against him, but only expressed their ill-will towards him, by declaring that they would not have him to reign over them. This is a fit representation of the causeless opposition which the Jewish great men made to Jesus. The message which these citizens sent after their prince had no effect; he received the kingdom, and returned with full authority, which he exercised in calling his servants to account, and in punishing his rebellious subjects. So the opposition which the Jews made to our Lord's being made king, proved ineffectual. Having therefore all power in heaven and in earth given unto him after his death, he will return to reckon with his apostles, and ministers, and rebellious subjects. Nay, he has returned already, and punished the Jews with a most exemplary punishment for resisting his government. Luke xix. 1. *And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading.* So Jesus, both at the day of men's death, and at the general judgment, will make a strict inquiry into the use and improvement which all his servants, but especially the ministers of the gospel, have made of the talents and opportunities committed unto them. 16. *Then*



*came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds.* The Hebrew *maneh*, and the Greek *μνα*, answering to it, was a sum of money weighing an hundred common shekels, each of which was about the fourth part of an ounce. The *μνα* therefore in silver, was in value L. 5 : 10 : 3 ; in gold it was equal to 95l. 5s. as may be seen by comparing 1 Kings x. 17. with 2 Chron. ix. 16. where the three manehs of gold, spoken of in the history of the Kings, are expressed by three hundred shekels of gold. However, the value of the maneh was fluctuating, as we learn from Ezek. xlv. 12. The first servant having been very diligent and successful, was greatly applauded by his lord, who rewarded him, by raising him to a considerable dignity in the kingdom which he had lately received. Luke xix. 17. *And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant, because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.* In like manner, the faithful apostles and ministers of Christ, shall be rewarded with great honour and authority in his kingdom. 18. *And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds.* The modesty of this and the former servant is remarkable. They do not say, that they themselves had gained the ten or the five pounds ; but they say, “ Thy pound hath gained ten pounds,” attributing their success not to themselves, but to the gifts of his grace. 19. *And he said likewise to him, Be thou also ruler over five cities.* This servant having been both diligent and successful, though in an inferior degree, was approved and rewarded accordingly ; for his lord gave him authority over five cities. Thus, the least of Christ’s faithful ministers and servants shall be rewarded with a proportionable share of the pleasures of his kingdom. 20. *And another came, saying, Lord, behold here is thy pound which I have kept laid up in a napkin.* 21. *For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man ; thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow.* This is a proverbial description of an unjust rigorous character. The slothful servant, by applying it to his lord, aggravated his crime not a little. He impudently told him, that knowing his severe and griping disposition, he thought it prudent not to risk his money in trade, for fear he should have lost it ; that he had hid it in a napkin, in order to deliver it to him safe at his return ; and that this was the true reason why he had not increased his talent as the others had done theirs. Thus slothful ministers of religion, and pretended servants of Christ, will be ever ready to throw the blame of their unfaithfulness on God himself. 22. *And he saith, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest, or rather, didst thou know, that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow.* See on Matt. xxv. 26. § 124. 23. *Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming*



*ing I might have required mine own with usury? (our tax, with interest.)* Thou hast been slothful in the highest degree; for if thou really hadst believed me to be the rigorous person thou sayest I am, thou certainly wouldst have been at the pains to lend out my money; a method of improvement of thy talent, which would have occasioned thee no trouble at all; thy excuse therefore is a mere pretence. In like manner, all the excuses which wicked ministers offer in their own behalf, shall at the bar of God stand them in no stead, whether they be drawn from the character which they affixed to God, or from his decrees, or from their own inability, or from the difficulty of his service, or from any other consideration whatever. - Luke xix. 24. *And he said to them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds.* 25. *And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.* They who stood by, the officers of justice who waited on the king, thought there was no occasion to give the pound to one who had so much already. Perhaps they thought it was more proper to give it to him who had only five pounds. But the king told them, they should do as he ordered, because it was agreeable to the rules of all wise administrations to bestow the most and greatest trusts on them, who by their fidelity in offices already enjoyed by them, have shewed that they best deserve them. 26. *For I say unto you, that unto every one which hath, shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.* The opportunities and advantages which he enjoys, shall be taken from him, and given to such as improve those already bestowed on them. 27. *But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.* Those who were guilty of rebellion against me, by doing all in their power to hinder my obtaining the kingdom, bring hither, and put them to death this instant. The Jews were Christ's enemies, who would not have him to reign over them; and for that crime he destroyed their nation.

Thus Jesus taught his disciples, that though they might imagine his kingdom was speedily to be erected, and that they were soon to partake of its joys, he was to go away, or die, before he obtained it; and that they were to perform a long course of laborious services, before they received their reward. That having obtained the kingdom at his resurrection, he would return and reckon with his servants, to whom he had given ability and opportunity for his work, and would treat them according to the fidelity they shewed in the trust committed unto them. Particularly, that he would execute vengeance on those, who, for his conversing familiarly with sinners, or for the difficulty or disagreeableness of his laws, or any other cause whatever, had refused to let him reign over them, or hindered the erection of his king-



dom among others. This Jesus did in some measure, when he destroyed the Jewish nation by the Roman armies; and still continues to do, by the extraordinary judgments, with which he sometimes visits mankind. But he will do it more eminently at the end of the world, when he shall come with millions of angels, finally to reward his faithful servants, and to punish his enemies. The kingdom of Christ spoken of in the parable, is his mediatorial kingdom, in which he rules men by his word and Spirit, and exercises the highest acts of kingly power, calls all his subjects without distinction to his tribunal, judges them, and rewards or punishes them according as he knows they deserve.

They who affix a more general meaning to this parable, suppose that the character and end of three sorts of persons are described in it. 1. The character of those who profess themselves the servants of Christ, and who act in a manner suitable to their profession. 2. The character of those who take on them the title, but do not act up to it. 3. The character of those, who, though they be Christ's natural subjects, neither profess themselves his servants, nor yield him obedience; but endeavour to shake off his yoke, and oppose him with all their might. The first sort are the true disciples of Christ. The second sort are hypocrites. The third are the openly profane. The treatment which the servants in the parable met with from their lord, represents the judgment and end of the different sorts of Christians just now mentioned. True disciples shall be munificently rewarded with the honours and pleasures of immortality; hypocrites shall be spoiled of all the advantages on which they relied, and stripped of those false virtues for which they valued themselves; so that being shewed to all the world in their proper colours, their pride shall be utterly mortified, and they themselves loaded with eternal infamy. Lastly, the detection and punishment of hypocrites shall add to the honours of the truly virtuous, whose merit shall thus shine more conspicuously; for as the houses and lands, which our Lord promised to those who followed him in the regeneration, (Mark x. 30. § 105.) signify not the things themselves, but the satisfaction arising from them; so the pound in the parable given to him that had the ten pounds, signifies, that virtuous persons in heaven shall have satisfactions as great as those which hypocrites enjoy in their advantages and supposed virtues, but upon a much more solid foundation, namely, the consciousness of real virtues, and the continual increase of grace. Thus shall the men who possess true goodness be rewarded. Having in their own eyes always appeared as nothing, they shall, by the approbation of God, be raised to a becoming sense of the excellent qualities with which they are adorned; and having been sorely distressed with the motions of sin, while they con-



stantly struggled against them, they shall now be made more than conquerors, and have infinite satisfaction in the victory. And as for the open enemies of Jesus, they shall be punished with exemplary punishment, severe in proportion to the degree of their guilt.

Having finished the parable, our Lord left the house of Zaccheus, and proceeded in his journey to Jerusalem. 28 *And when he had thus spoken, he went before, ascending up to Jerusalem.* By his alacrity in the journey, he shewed how willing he was to undergo those heavy sufferings which he knew were to befall him in Jerusalem.

**§ CX. Jesus is anointed by Mary in Bethany. See § 43. 123.**  
John xi. 55,—57. xii. 1,—11.

OUR Lord was now on the road to Jerusalem, where he proposed to celebrate the passover. But the people who were come up early to purify themselves, wondering that he was not arrived, inquired for him, and said to one another as they stood in the temple, Is he afraid, and will not come to the feast? John xi. 55. *And the Jews passover was nigh at hand; and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, \* to purify themselves.* 56. *Then sought they for Jesus, and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that he will not come to the feast?* This delay was occasioned by the chief priests, who after the resurrection of Lazarus, had issued out a proclamation, promising a reward to any who would discover the place of his retirement., 57. *Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that if any man knew where he were, he should shew it, that they might take him.*

At length Jesus came to Bethany six days before the passover. And because it was evening when he arrived, he turned in to lodge with Lazarus whom he had raised from the dead. John xii. 1. *Then Jesus, six days before the passover, came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.* 2. *† There they made him a supper, and Martha served,*

\* Ver. 55. *To purify themselves.*] Those who were under any legal incapacity of celebrating the great solemnities of the Jewish religion, usually went up to Jerusalem before the feasts to cleanse themselves, by offering the sacrifices appointed for their purification. Moreover, those who were under vows of Nazaritism, usually ordered matters so, as that they were concluded at one of the great feasts. These things occasioned a great concourse of people at Jerusalem before the feasts, but especially before the passover. The time necessary to many purifications was seven days; this occasioned the people to come to Jerusalem early. Accordingly, when Jesus came six days before the passover, he found great multitudes in the city.

† Ver. 2. *There they made him a supper, &c.*] Although this supper is supposed



*served, but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him. 3. Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with*

supposed by many to have been the same with that mentioned Matt. xxvi. 6. upon examination they will appear to have been different. This happened in the house of Lazarus, that in the house of Simon the leper, ver. 6. At this, Mary, the sister of Lazarus, anointed our Lord's feet, and wiped them with her hair; at that, a woman, not named, poured the ointment on his head, ver. 7. Here Judas only found fault with the action; there he was seconded by some of the rest, ver. 8. It seems all the disciples but Judas had let this first anointing pass without censure. But when they saw so expensive a compliment repeated, and that within a few days the one of the other, they joined with him in blaming the woman, and might think themselves warranted to do so, as they knew that their Master was not delighted with luxuries of any kind. After the anointing mentioned by Matthew, Judas went and bargained with the priests, to deliver his Master into their hands, ver. 14. Yet two days before the passover they consulted among themselves how they might take him by subtilty, ver. 3. This deliberation was absolutely unnecessary, if the anointing mentioned by Matthew, had been the same with that in John. For the anointing being expressly fixed by John to the sixth day before the passover, the bargain which Judas struck with the priests to betray his Master, is of course fixed to the same day, having happened immediately after the anointing, ver. 14. If so, the priests, six days before the passover, knew of a method to take Jesus by subtilty, and therefore had no occasion formally to consult about it two days before the passover. To conclude, the place in the history which Matthew has assigned to his anointing, implies that it happened two days before the passover; whereas the anointing mentioned by John is expressly said to have been six days before that feast. Matt. xxvi. 1. "And it came to pass when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples, 2. Ye know that after two days is *the feast* of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified. 3. (Τὸς οὐρχηθῶσαν) Then assembled the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas: 4. And consulted, that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill him." They assembled about the time that Jesus finished his discourses on the mount of Olives. But considering the nature and number of the things which he did in the temple, before he came out to the mount of Olives (see on Matt. xxvi. 2. § 125.) where the words, (Matt. xxvi. 1.) were spoken, it must then have been toward sun-setting. This, I suppose, was the reason that the council did not meet at the temple as usual, but at the high priest's palace; it was the reason also that Jesus left the mount immediately, and went to Bethany, where, on his arrival, he sat down to supper, and was anointed. With this anointing, the traitor's bargain to betray Jesus is so connected by Matthew, as to imply that it happened in consequence of the anointing. Being rebuked for censuring the woman that anointed his Master, he rose up in a passion, and went into the city to the high priest's, where he found the council assembled, deliberating about the proper method of apprehending Jesus by stratagem, as the evangelist had told in the beginning of the chapter. This the particle of connection made use of, plainly suggests, ver. 14. (τὸς προεβούλετο) "Then one of the twelve, named Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests," &c. Wherefore the anointing, after which Judas bargained with the priests, happened only two days before the passover, and consequently was different



*with her bair*: she did these things in token of the warm sense she had of the many favours he had conferred on her and her relations, but especially for the wonderful kindness he had lately shewed to her brother Lazarus. From this action of Mary's, as well as from Martha's serving now, and on a former occasion, it would appear that Mary was the elder sister. *And the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.* 4. *Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him,* 5. *Why was not this ointment sold for \* three hundred pence, and given to the poor?* Judas was angry because his Master had not taken the ointment with a view to sell it, pretending that the price received for it might have been bestowed on the poor. Nevertheless, his real motive was covetousness; for as he carried the

rent from that mentioned by John, which was six days before that solemnity.

Thus it evidently appears that our Lord was anointed with spikenard three different times during the course of his ministry, once in the house of Simon the Pharisee, § 48. once in the house of Lazarus, and once in the house of Simon the leper. § 125. That this honour should have been done him so often, needs not be thought strange; for in those countries it was common at entertainments to pour fragrant oils on the heads of such guests as they designed to distinguish with marks of extraordinary respect. The custom is alluded to, Psal. xlv. 7. "God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." Where this piece of civility was shewed, it was an expression of the highest complacency, and produced great gladness in the person who was the object of it. Hence, besides the emblematical reason of the ceremony, it was fitly made use of at the instalment of persons into high offices. And therefore because the only begotten Son of God, was to sustain greater dignities, and execute more important offices, than ever were sustained or executed among men, and was fitted for them by more extraordinary endowments than men possessed, having the Spirit given him without measure, he had the name of the *Messiah*, *Christ*, (see John i. 42. Matt. i. 16. Luke ii. 11.) or *the anointed One*, appropriated to him by way of eminence. He was anointed with the oil of gladness infinitely above his fellows, the other kings, and priests, and prophets, whom God from time to time had raised up, and honoured with the title of *his anointed ones*.

\* Ver. 5. *Three hundred pence.*] The Roman penny which is here spoken of, was equal to sevenpence half-penny of our money. Three hundred of these pence therefore amounted to about nine pounds, seven shillings and sixpence Sterling. From the value of the ointment it would appear, that Lazarus and his sisters were not persons of the meanest rank. They were rather of a better station than ordinary, otherwise they could not have afforded so costly a present, nor would Jesus have received it at their hands. Besides, this conjecture is confirmed by the kind of company that came from the city to comfort the two sisters on the death of their brother. The evangelist calls them *the Jews*, a word which he commonly makes use of to denote the principal inhabitants of Jerusalem; see the Concordances. The action of Mary, and the office which Martha sustained at this feast, are by no means inconsistent with their supposed station; for they might think they could not put sufficient honour on one whom they esteemed so highly, and to whom they were so much indebted. If the station of Lazarus was better than common, the miracle of his resurrection must for that reason have been the more illustrious.



the bag, he thought if his Master had sold the ointment, he would have gotten the money to keep, and so might have applied part of it to his own private use. But it is no new thing for the basest men, to cover their blackest crimes with the fair pretence of zeal for the honour of God, and the interests of religion. John xii. 6. *This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare (Carav. carried off, stole, see the critics on this passage) what was put therein.* 7. *Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.* 8. *For the poor always ye have with you, but me ye have not always.* See on Matt. xxvi. 8,—13. § 125.

Bethany being within two miles of Jerusalem, the news of his arrival soon reached the city, and drew out great numbers of the citizens; for they had a curiosity to see the man that had been raised from the dead, and the still more wonderful man that had raised him. 9. *Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also whom he had raised from the dead.* When they came and saw Lazarus, many of them *believed*; that is, were convinced both of Lazarus' resurrection, and of the divinity of Christ's mission. But the news of their believing, together with the reason of it, being currently reported in Jerusalem, came to the chief priests ears, and incensed them to such a degree, that they resolved to kill not Jesus only, but if possible Lazarus also. 10. *But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death;* 11. *Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, namely, to Bethany, and, after seeing him, believed on Jesus, namely, as their long expected Messiah.*

§ CXI. *Jesus enters Jerusalem publicly as Messiah. He weeps over the city.* See § 91. 121. Matt. xxi. 1.—11. Mark xi. 1,—11. Luke xix. 29,—44. John xii. 12,—19.

THE multitude which attended our Lord in this journey, (Matt. xx. 29.) having increased prodigiously as he advanced towards Jerusalem, he did not now shun them and enter the city privately, as he had always done on former occasions. The people were to honour him with the title of *Messiah* publicly, that he might have an opportunity of accepting that august name in the most avowed manner, before he ascended into heaven. Moreover, the priests, who had issued out a proclamation against him (John xi. 57.) were to be awed, at least for a while, and restrained from offering him violence. For as he had doctrines to teach, rebukes to give, and other things to do that could not fail to incense those proud rulers, without doubt they would have put him to death prematurely, had not the people appeared on his side. Accordingly, after the parable of the husbandman was spoken,  
Matt,



Matt. xxi. 45. the priests "sought to lay hands on him, but feared the multitude because they took him for a prophet." Nay the whole council was intimidated by them; for in their deliberation about putting Jesus to death, Matt. xxvi. 5. they said to one another, "Not on the feast-day, lest there be an uproar among the people." Our Lord's driving the buyers and sellers out of the temple, his parables of the husbandmen and marriage-supper, representing the rejection of the Jewish nation, and the downfall of their state, with the woes denounced against the Pharisees in their own hearing, made part of the work he had to do before he ascended, which would have brought instant destruction upon him, had not the great men's rage been restrained by the uncommon respect which the people generally shewed him. Wherefore the multitude being now very great, and Jesus having such good reasons not to shun them as formerly, he sent two of his disciples for an ass, which never had been rode upon, but which, by his simple volition, he could tame, proposing, according to the prophecy, Zech. ix. 9. to ride into the city, amidst the surrounding throng. Probably there were strait passes in the mount of Olives, through which the road lay, Luke xix. 37.-and no doubt narrow streets in the city also, by which he was to go to the temple. In these narrow passes and lanes he might have been incommoded by the press, had he walked on foot. Besides, the strangers who were now in Jerusalem, would increase the crowd. It seems they knew of his coming, John xii. 12. and perhaps expected that he was bringing Lazarus along with him, to shew him in public as a trophy of his power; compare John xii. 12. with ver. 18. For the sight of Lazarus in Bethany having already induced many to believe, they might naturally suppose that his appearing openly would produce the same effect in Jerusalem. And as they were in full hopes that the kingdom was to be erected at this passover, they could not but think it necessary that all opposers should instantly be convinced, and obliged to acknowledge Messiah's title to the throne of his illustrious ancestors.

Three of the evangelists omitting our Lord's transactions in Bethany, the night before his public entry, introduce the history of the latter as follows: Luke xix. 29. *And it came to pass when he was come nigh to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount called the mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, 30. Saying, Go ye into the village over against you. Mark xi. 1. And when they came nigh to Jerusalem, unto Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount of Olives, he sendeth forth two of his disciples, 2 And saith unto them, Go your way into the village over against you. Matt. xxi. 1. And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, 2. Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you.*



you. Mark and Luke mention Bethphage before Bethany. This I think implies, that travellers in their way to Jerusalem from Jericho, arrived at Bethphage before they came to Bethany. These two villages were situated at the foot of the mount of Olives, and the road to the city lay between them, only it was nearer to Bethphage than Bethany; therefore when Jesus, in travelling from Jericho, came to the foot of the mountain, he was but a little way from Bethphage. Nevertheless, intending to lodge in Bethany with Lazarus, he went thither. Next day, returning to the road from Jericho, he sent the two disciples to Bethphage, with orders to bring him an ass, which they should find tied at the end of the town. If the reader will view the several expressions made use of, by the evangelists in the light of this description, he will see the exact propriety of each of them. Jesus sent the disciples away, "when he was come nigh to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount of Olives," as Luke tells us; or, as Mark expresses it, "when they came nigh to Jerusalem, unto Bethphage and Bethany," a phrase which not only determines the place from whence the disciples were sent away, but shews on what quarter Jesus and his train were approaching the town. Both the villages being situated at the foot of the mountain\*, and Jesus being between them, on the road from Jericho to Jerusalem, he might very properly be said to have been nigh to both, and nigh to Jerusalem, which was at the distance of about two miles only. Also he "was come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives," as Matthew expresses it, because the road was nearer Bethphage than Bethany. And as Jesus was coming from Bethany, when he sent the disciples away, Bethphage, whither he sent them, must have been directly opposite unto them; hence it is termed the village over against them (*απεναντι, εναντι*) being a little off the road to the city. Matt. xxi. 2. *And straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with ber: (Mark, as soon as ye be entered into it, ye shall find: Luke, in the which, at your entering, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon yet never man sat) loose them, and bring them unto me. 3. And if any man say aught*

\* Lightfoot, indeed, and others, on the authority of some dubious expressions in the Talmud, affirm that Bethphage was so near Jerusalem, that its extremity reached almost to the walls thereof. But from Luke xix. 37. it is evident that Jesus and his train passed over the mount of Olives, in their way to Jerusalem, not only after they departed from Bethany, but from Bethphage also. Besides, the distance of Bethany from Jerusalem, viz. fifteen furlongs, or about two miles, John xi. 18. shews plainly that it stood on the side of the mountain that was farthest from Jerusalem, the nearest side being only a sabbath day's journey, or one mile from the city. Acts i. 12. Wherefore since Matthew tells us that Bethphage was situated at the foot of the mountain, and the other evangelists join Bethphage with Bethany, as being near to one another, it is certain that Bethphage likewise stood on the eastern side of the hill, the side that was farthest from Jerusalem.



ought unto you, (Luke, *ask you, Why do ye loose him?*) ye shall say, (Luke, *Because*) The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them. 4. All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, (Zech. ix. 9.) saying, 5. Tell ye the daughter of Sion, i. e. Jerusalem, so called because a part of it was situated on the north side of Mount Sion, Psal. xlviii. 2. Behold thy king cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass. See on John xii. 15. p. 587.

When the disciples came to Bethphage, they found the ass with its colt, as Jesus had said, and immediately set about loosing them; but the owner happening to be present, reprov'd them. Wherefore they returned the answer which their Master had put into their mouth, and were suffered to lead both away. Mark xi. 4. *And they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door, without, in a place where two ways met; and they loose him.* 5. *And certain of them that stood there, (Luke, the owners thereof) said unto them, What do ye loosing the colt?* 6 *And they said unto them even as Jesus had commanded: (Luke, they said, The Lord hath need of him) and they let them go.* The event thus corresponding to the words of Jesus, must have convinced the disciples that he knew every thing, and could influence the wills of men, as often as he pleased to exert his power for that purpose.

Mark xi. 7. *And they brought the colt (Matt. the ass and the colt) to Jesus, who it seems had waited for their return at the bottom of the hill, and cast their garments on him, (Luke, upon the colt. Matt. put on them their clothes) to supply the place of a saddle, (Matt. and they set him thereon, ~~αυτων αυτων~~. See on Matt. xxvii. 44. § 146.) and he sat upon him.* For though the creature had never been used in riding before, it was perfectly tame on this occasion. When the multitude saw him mounted, they immediately bethought themselves of shewing him the honours which kings and conquerors obtained in their triumphal entries. For as they all firmly believed that he would take the reins of government into his own hands at this passover, they had a mind to make his entry into Jerusalem have the air of a triumph. Accordingly, some spread their garments in the way\*, others cut down branches off the trees, and strewed them in the way, carrying the larger sort on high, in procession before Messiah, as demonstrations of their joy. See Lev. xxiii. 40. 2 Macc. x. 7. Matt. xxi. 8. *And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; (Luke, And as he went, they spread their clothes*

\* See 2 Kings ix. 13. where it is related, that the captains, when they proclaimed Jehu king, put their garments under him, on the top of the stairs, as a mark of their respect.



*clothes in the way) others cut down branches from the trees, and strewed them in the way.*

The news of our Lord's approach having reached the city, great numbers of the people who were come from the country to attend the feast, and who had a favourable opinion of his character, went forth with palm-branches in their hands, to welcome Messiah to the capital. John xii. 12. *On the next day, viz. the day after Jesus was anointed in Bethany, much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, 13. Took branches of palm-trees, and went forth to meet him.* When the van of the procession that attended Jesus, came to the descent of the mount of Olives, where the royal city first shewed itself, they were met by the multitude from Jerusalem, coming up the hill with palm-branches; the symbols of peace in their hands. At meeting, the latter first saluted their brethren, and cried, *Hosanna, blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.* When the disciples looked on the royal city, and heard such a multitude of their countrymen proclaiming their Master Messiah, they felt high transports of joy, and answered by returning the salutation. Luke xix. 37. *And when he was come nigh, viz. to Jerusalem, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples (Matt. the multitudes that went before and that followed) began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice, for all the mighty works that they had seen, 38. Saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord, i. e. Messiah, peace in heaven.* Let happiness reign in heaven, by the admission of multitudes of the human species, and glory in the highest. Let praise on this account be given to God by the highest orders of beings. They said also, Matt. xxi. 9. \* *Hosanna to the Son of David: blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.* These are nearly the words of Psal. cxviii. 26. Mark says; they cried likewise, *Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh, or which is to be erected now in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest, or rather, among the highest;* the meaning of the disciples being this, Let the highest orders of angels join us, in praying for the prosperity of King Messiah.

Thus Jesus rode amidst the acclamations and shoutings of the admiring crowd. But we must not imagine that these honours were paid to him by any solicitation of his. The disciples and the multitude did all of their own accord. Indeed, for the reasons mentioned, Jesus was passive in the matter, and would neither refuse the title of Messiah, nor reprove the people who offered

\* Matt. 9. *Hosanna.*] The word Hosanna in Hebrew signifies, *Save we beseech.* Applied to Jesus on this occasion, it was of the same import with our acclamation, *God save the king,* and in our language would have been expressed thus, *God save King Messiah.*



ferred it, though required to do both by the Pharisees, who had come with the multitude from the town, and were greatly displeased with the homage that was offered to him. Luke xix. 39. *And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude, said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples.* 40. *And he answered and said unto them, I tell you, that if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.* This latter clause may signify either that God would by miracle raise up others to glorify his name, rather than silence should be kept on this occasion, as Dr Clarke explains it; or that it was a thing altogether impossible to make the multitude hold their peace. But though Jesus did not refuse the honours that were now paid him, he was far from assuming the dignity of an earthly prince, or any state pageantry whatsoever. On the contrary, he humbled himself exceedingly; his riding on an ass being an instance of great meekness and humility, according to what was prophesied of him, Zech. ix. 9. John xii. 14. \* *And Jesus when he had found a young ass, called by the other evangelists a colt, sat thereon; as it is written, 15. Fear not, daughter of Sion; behold thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt.* We shall easily see the propriety of applying Zechariah's prophecy to this transaction, if we remember that in the east, riding on horses was anciently reckoned the greatest ostentation of magnificence. It was therefore becoming the meekness of the lowly Jesus, that in his most public entry into the capital city, he chose to ride on an ass. At the same time, there was nothing mean or ridiculous in it, asses being the beasts which the Easterns commonly made use of in riding. It seems the disciples did not at that time form a just notion of what their Master designed by this entry, or by any of the circumstances of it. Probably they considered it as the first step of his exaltation to the throne. However, after his ascension, recollecting the prophecies concerning Messiah, they remembered how exactly they had been fulfilled in him, and found their faith greatly strengthened thereby. 16. *These things understood not his disciples at the first; but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him.* But because the forwardness which the multitude now shewed to acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah was altogether extraordinary, the evangelist assigns the cause thereof.

The

\* Ver. 14. *And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, &c.]* *ἐπεὶ δὲ* may better be translated, *Now Jesus, having found a young ass, sat* For the evangelist does not mean that Jesus was saluted by the multitude from Jerusalem before he mounted, but his meaning is, that Jesus was riding when they saluted him. Or because Jesus sent for the ass, *ἐπεὶ δὲ* may be translated, *having procured*, a sense of the word *ἐπιποιεῖν*, which Ulpian directs us to, in Orat. Demosth. contra Timocr. where he tells us it signifies “labore suo aliquid consequi.” See Beza on Matt. xvi. 25.



The witnesses of the resurrection of Lazarus zealously bestirred themselves on this occasion; they had published the miracle far and near; they were many in number, and persons of reputation. Hence their report gained universal belief, and drew out an innumerable multitude to meet Jesus; a circumstance which, as the historian observes, gave great credit to the miracle, as it proved what sense the people of the age and country where it was performed, had of it. John xii. 17. *The people therefore that was with him, when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record:* The inhabitants of Bethany and Jerusalem, who were so happy as to be present at Lazarus' resurrection, by attending on Jesus at this time, and joining with the multitude in their acclamations, bare record to the truth of that astonishing miracle. 18. *For this cause the people also met him, for that they heard that he had done this miracle.* In the mean time, the Pharisees and the great men were exceedingly enraged, because every measure they had taken to hinder the people from following Jesus, had proved ineffectual. 19. *The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold the world is gone after him.*

As Jesus drew nigh, he looked on the city, and notwithstanding he had already met with much ill usage from its inhabitants, and was at this very juncture to be put to death by them, yet with a divine generosity and benevolence, which nothing can equal, he wept over it in the view of the surrounding multitude, lifting up his voice and lamenting aloud the calamities which he foresaw were coming upon it, because its inhabitants were ignorant of the time of their visitation. Luke xix. 41. *And when he was come near, he beheld the city and wept over it, 42. Saying, If thou badst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. 43 For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side.* Here Jesus foretold particularly the principal circumstances of the siege of Jerusalem. And to his prophecy the event corresponded most exactly. • For when Titus attacked the city, the Jews defended themselves so obstinately, that he found there was no way to gain his purpose, but to compass the city round with a trench and mound. By this means he kept the besieged in on every side, cut off from them all hope of safety by flight, and consumed them by famine. The work which he undertook was indeed a matter of extreme difficulty, for the wall measured thirty-nine furlongs, or almost five miles, and the towers were thirteen in number, every one of them ten furlongs in compass. Nevertheless, the whole was finished in three days; for to use the expression of Josephus, the soldiers in performing this work were animated by a divine impetus,



petus, Bell. vi. 13. Luke xix. 44. *And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee, and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another.* This circumstance is taken notice of in the larger prophecy concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, Mark xiii. 1. § 123. Our Lord mentioned it likewise in one of his prophetic parables, Matt. xxii. 7. § 116. The description which Josephus has given of the taking of Jerusalem by Titus, may be considered as a comment upon these prophecies. Bell. vii. 18. "Thus was Jerusalem taken in the second year of Vespasian's reign, on the 8th day of September; and having been already five times surprised, it was again finally destroyed. Such was the end of the besieging of Jerusalem, when there was none left to kill, nor any thing remaining for the soldiers to get. Cesar commanded them to destroy the city and temple, only leaving certain towers standing that were more beautiful than the rest, viz. Phaselus, Hippicos, and Mariamne, and the wall that was on the west side, meaning there to keep a garrison, and that they should be a monument of the prowess of the Romans, who had taken a city so well fortified, as by them it appeared to have been. All the rest of the city they so levelled," answering to our Lord's phrase, *lay thee even with the ground*, "that they who had not seen it before, would not believe that ever it had been inhabited." And in the preceding chapter he says, "they destroyed the wall and burned the outward part of the city." See concerning the slaughter of the inhabitants on Luke xxi. 24. and concerning the burning of the temple, on Mark xiii. 2. § 123. *Because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.* Our Lord here assigns the cause of the destruction of Jerusalem and her children. It was because, that when God visited them by his Son, the seed of Abraham and David, the Messiah, they did not know it, but rejected and crucified him. The destruction of the city, and of her inhabitants, clearly foreseen by our Lord in all the circumstances thereof, was a scene so affecting that it moved his tender soul, and made him weep. It seems the miseries of his bitterest enemies had more influence to afflict and melt his soul, than the admiration, the acclamations, and hosannas of his friends to elate him with joy. His weeping was a wonderful instance of his humanity, and is so far from lessening the dignity of his character, that it exalts it infinitely. Were it worth while, the reader might be put in mind that the historians of Greece and Rome, to aggrandize their heroes, have been at pains to relate occurrences at which they shed tears; but this would be to fall egregiously below the greatness of the subject. Is it possible to have the least relish for goodness, and not to be ravished with the man who has such a quick feeling of the miseries of others, as to weep for their misfortunes in the height of his own prosperity; especially if the objects moving his compassion are enemies,



enemies, and his courage is such as to enable him to look without perturbation on the greatest disasters ready to fall on himself? See Matt. xx. 18, 19. Let wondering mortals then behold in this, an example of compassion and generosity, infinitely superior to any thing that the heathen world can furnish, an example highly worthy of their admiration and imitation.

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in an uproar, on account of the prodigious concourse of people that accompanied him, probably continuing their acclamations as he passed along; see Matt. xxi. 15. Mark xi. 11. *And Jesus entered into Jerusalem.* Matt. xxi. 10. *And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? 11. And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.* The *multitude*, is the appellation which the sacred historians commonly give to Christ's friends. Wherefore, as they are here said to have called him the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee, we may suppose they did it with a view to mortify his enemies. As if they had said, You have always affirmed that no prophet, no Messiah, can arise out of Galilee; what is your opinion now? Jesus rode directly to the temple, but did not drive the buyers and sellers out this first day; for Mark expressly tells us, it was evening by the time he got thither, and had looked round on all things; from which we learn that the market in the temple, which he intended to prohibit, was over. It seems he staid in Jerusalem but a little while. Having made his public appearance in the metropolis, and received the title of Messiah openly from the multitude, and surveyed the temple, he left the city without doing any thing, to the great discouragement of the throng that had come in with him, expecting he was immediately to have laid hold on the reins of government. Mark xi. 11. *And Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple; and when he had looked round about upon all things, and now the even-tide was come, he went out unto Bethany with the twelve.* See on Luke xxi. 37. § 125.

§ CXII. *The fig-tree is cursed, and the temple is purged.* Matt. xxi. 12,—22. Mark ix. 12,—26. Luke xix. 45, 46.

JESUS and his disciples having lodged all night in Bethany, departed next morning for Jerusalem. By the way they happened to spy a fig-tree that looked green, was full of leaves, and at a distance promised abundance of fruit. To this tree Jesus went, in expectation of finding figs thereon, for he was hungry, and the season of gathering them was not yet come. Mark xi. 12. *And on the morrow when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry. 13. \* And seeing a fig-tree afar off, having leaves, he came,*

\* Mark 13. *And seeing a fig tree afar off, having leaves*] From the circumstance



came; if haply he might find any thing thereon; and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves: \* for the time of figs was not yet; the unfruitfulness of the tree at this season shewing it to be absolutely barren. 14. Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever; (Matt. 19. Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever) and his disciples heard it (Matt. and presently the fig-tree withered away). This, like some other of our Lord's actions, was emblematical. Its meaning was the same with the parable of the barren fig-tree, § 89.; for, properly speaking, it was that parable represented in action. See on Mark xi. 21. p. 595.

Jesus having doomed the fig-tree to destruction, continued his journey to the city. When he arrived, he went straightway to the temple, and drove the buyers and sellers out of it, overturned the tables of the money changers, (see on John ii. 14. § 20.) and the stalls of them that sold doves, and would not suffer any vessel to be carried through the sacred edifice. Mark xi. 15. *And they came to Jerusalem: and Jesus went into the temple, (Matt. of God) and began to cast out them (Matt. all them) that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves. 16. And would*

cumstance of the fig-tree's having leaves at this season, (see Matt. xxiv. 32.) it would seem to have been of the kind which Pliny has described as a native of Syria, Nat. Hist. lib. xiii. cap 8. "Ob id quidam Ægyptiam ficum dixere, errore manifesto. Non enim in Ægypto nascitur, sed in Syria Ioniaque, et circa Gnidum, atque in Rhodis, semper comantibus foliis, flore candido, cum vehementia odoris plantigera imis partibus, et ideo superficie flavesceus, succum auferente sobole. Pomo antecedentis anni circa canis ortus retracto, statim alterum parit: postea florem, per arcturum hyeme foetus enutrientem." See Jewish Antiq. Disc. viii. concerning the Boccores.

\* Mark, 13 For the time of figs was not yet.] Καρπὸς συκῶν properly signifies, the season of gathering figs, as καρπὸς τῶν κερπῶν, Matt. xxi. 34. signifies, the season of gathering the fruits. In construing this passage, the latter clause must be joined with the words, he came if haply he might find any thing thereon; thus, he came if haply he might find any thing thereon, for the season of gathering figs was not yet. That this is the true construction of the passage is plain, because the evangelist is not giving the reason why there were no figs on the tree, but the reason why Jesus expected to find some on it. He tells us the season of gathering figs was not yet come, to shew that none had been taken off the tree; and consequently, that having its whole produce upon it, there was nothing improper in Christ's expecting fruit on it then. Whereas, if we shall think the reason why he did not find any figs, was, that the time of them was not come, we must acknowledge that the tree was cursed very improperly for having none. It is true this interpretation makes a trajection necessary; yet it is not more extraordinary, than that which is found in Mark xvi. 3, 4. where the clause for it was very great, viz. the stone at the door of the sepulchre, does not relate to what immediately precedes it, viz. and when they looked they saw the stone rolled away, but to the remote member, they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? for it was very great.



would not suffer that any man should carry any vessel through the temple. The Jews reckoning the lower and outer court of the temple a place of no sanctity, because it was designed for accommodating the Gentile proselytes in their worship, not only kept a daily market there of such things as were necessary in offering sacrifices, but suffered the common porters, in going from one part of the city to another, with their burdens, to pass through it, for the sake of shortening their way. But as these abuses occasioned great disturbance to the proselytes, Jesus reformed them a second time, telling the people around him, that the Gentiles worshipped there by divine appointment, as well as the Jews, the temple being ordained of God to be the house of prayer for all nations; and to prove this, he cited Isa. lvi. 7. from which the inference was plain, that they were guilty of a gross profanation of the temple, who carried on any traffic even in the court of the Gentiles, much more they who, to make gain, committed frauds and extortions in the prosecution of their traffic, because thus they turned God's house of prayer into a den of thieves. Mark xi. 17. *And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves.* The offenders did not make the least resistance. Probably they were struck with a panic by the secret energy of Christ's omnipotence; as was the case formerly, when he made the like reformation at the first passover after his ministry commenced. To this purpose Jerom in locum. "Igneum enim quiddam, atque sydereum radiebat ex oculis ejus, et divinitatis majestas lucebat in facie." Or, without having recourse to any thing supernatural, the sellers and buyers may have been intimidated by our Lord's numerous train of attendants, who were ready to support him in whatever reformation he thought proper to make, believing him to be the Messiah.

It seems the opinion that Jesus was Messiah prevailed generally now; for while he was in the temple, the blind, and the lame, and other diseased persons, were brought to him in great numbers, from all quarters, to be healed; and the very children, when they saw the cures which he performed, proclaimed him the Son of David, so wonderfully were they struck with his miracles. Indeed the chief priests and doctors, finding him thus universally acknowledged, were highly displeased; yet they durst not do any thing to put a stop to it, standing in awe of the multitude. They only asked him, if he heard what the children said; insinuating that it was his duty to stop their mouths, by refusing the praises which they offered without understanding what they said. 14. *And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them.* 15. *And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple,*



ple, and saying, *Hosanna to the Son of David*, they were sore displeased, 16. And said unto him, *Hearest thou what these say?* Jesus answered them out of the eighth Psalm, where David observes, that though all should be silent, God has no need of other heralds to proclaim his praise, than infants who hang at their mothers breast; because, notwithstanding they be dumb, the admirable providence of God conspicuous in their preservation, is equal to the loudest and sublimest eloquence. *And Jesus saith unto them, Yea, have ye never read, Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou \* hast perfected praise?* By applying the Psalmist's words to the case in hand, Jesus signified, that the meanest of God's works are so formed as to declare the greatness of his perfections; and that as the Father does not refuse the praise which arises from the least of his creatures, so the Son did not disdain the praise that was offered him by children. In the present instance their praise was peculiarly acceptable, because it implied that his miracles were exceedingly illustrious, in as much as they led minds, wherein there was nothing but the dawnings of reason, to acknowledge his mission. The Messiah's praise therefore might with remarkable propriety be said on this occasion, to have been perfected out of the mouths of babes and sucklings. Mark xi. 18. *And the Scribes and Pharisees heard it*: they heard the rebuke which he had given them for allowing the temple to be profaned; they heard likewise the application which he had made of the eighth Psalm, to the case of the children in the temple wishing him all manner of prosperity. *And sought how they might destroy him; for they feared him, because all the people was astonished at his doctrine.* The authority which Jesus now assumed, and the honours which were paid to him, galled the Scribes and Pharisees; for they began to be afraid of him, suspecting that he might raise some popular commotion; and the rather, that all the common people were wonderfully struck with his doctrine. They durst not however attempt any thing against him openly; they only consulted among themselves how they might destroy him with as little noise as possible. When the evening was

\* Matt. 16. *Hast perfected praise.*] In Psal. viii. from which this is taken, the words are: *Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast founded strength, because of the enemy.* To found is to establish and make firm. The strength here said to be founded, denotes the perfections of God, but especially his power, wisdom and goodness, very emblematically termed the divine strength. These God hath founded or established, out of the mouth of babes and sucklings. In the providence which he exercises towards infants, he has given incontestible evidence of his infinite perfections, which are his strength, and the ground of all the praise that is offered to him by his creatures, and thereby he hath established them in opposition to all the frivolous arguments made use of by his enemies to overthrow them. Thus the Psalm and the citation agree perfectly in sense, though they be different in words.



was come, Jesus left the city, and went to Bethany, the resurrection of Lazarus having procured him many friends in that village, among whom he was always in safety. 19. *And when even was come, he went out of the city* (Matt. 17. *into Bethany, and he lodged there*).

Next morning, as they were returning to Jerusalem, it astonished the disciples not a little when they looked on the fig-tree \* that had been pronounced barren the night before, and found it  
“dried

\* Our Lord cursed the fig-tree in the morning of the day, on which he cast the buyers and sellers out of the temple. And though the tree began at that instant to wither, the disciples did not take notice of its withering, because they left the spot just as Jesus was pronouncing the curse. Neither did they observe it in the evening, as they returned to Bethany; probably because it was dark when they passed by, and the tree was at a little distance from the road. They observed it only as they were going into the town next morning, when it gave occasion to the conversation concerning the efficacy of faith. But the withering of the fig-tree, and the conversation occasioned thereby, having a connection, might either be related among the transactions of the day on which the curse was pronounced, or among the transactions of the day whereon the conversation occasioned by its withering happened; or they might be related separately, each in its own day. This suggests an easy reconciliation of the seemingly different times that are assigned to this miracle by Matthew and Mark. Matthew, in the beginning of his account, is still describing the transactions of the day on which Jesus cursed the fig-tree, as he went to purge the temple. Matt. xxi. 18. *Πρωίης δὲ, παραγών υς τὴν πόλιν, πεινάσας.* But in the morning, viz. of the day, the transactions of which the evangelist had been relating, not the morning of the day following, as is commonly supposed: “In the morning, as he returned into the city, he had hungered (*πεινάσας*, Aorist.) 19. And seeing (*τυκὴν μίαν*) a single fig-tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever; and (*ἐξηραθὲς παραχρῆμα*, *exaruit illico*.—Beza.) it withered forthwith;” that is, began to wither from that time forth, though the disciples did not then observe it, because they passed by while Jesus was pronouncing the curse; neither did they observe it as they came out in the evening, because in all probability it was dark. “20, And when the disciples saw it,” saw the fig-tree withered from the roots, viz. next morning, as they were returning to the city from Bethany; for so we are told expressly in the more particular account which Mark has given of this miracle: “When the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig-tree withered away!” See many examples of the like transition and connection, in the illustration of the third Preliminary Observation.

If the reader does not approve of this solution, he must suppose, either that two fig-trees were cursed, or that the temple was twice purged. The latter, though it is not without its difficulties, is the easier supposition of the two. But the solution, arising from the translation of the passage, offered above, seems more natural than either of them. For, as Matthew chose to relate the cursing of the fig-tree, and the effect of the curse together, it was proper to speak of the curse, after relating the other transactions of the day whereon it happened, though it was pronounced in the morning. The reason was, by narrating it last, he of course connected it with its effect, which was the first transaction of the next day to be mentioned in the history. The sacred volume furnishes several examples  
of



“dried up from the roots,” that is, quite withered down to the ground and shrunk. Peter in particular expressed great surprise at it. Mark xi. 20. *And in the morning as they passed by, they saw the fig-tree dried up from the roots.* 21. *And Peter calling to remembrance, saith unto him, Master; behold the fig-tree which thou cursedst is withered away.* We have seen already, that Jesus said to the tree, “No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever.” This Peter, according to the Jewish manner of speaking concerning things that are barren, (Heb. vi. 8.) called a *curfing of the fig-tree*. And some ill-disposed readers, not apprehending the proper force of the words, are apt to form a very unbecoming notion of Jesus from this action. But they do so without the least cause. Every thing he said on the occasion was decent. Moreover the transaction itself was emblematical and prophetic, prefiguring the speedy ruin of the Jewish nation, on account of its unfruitfulness under greater advantages than any other people enjoyed at that day; and like all the rest of his miracles was done with a gracious intention, namely, to alarm his countrymen, and to induce them to repent. See the Harmony at Mark xi. 19. Matt. xxi. 20. *And when the disciples saw it, viz. the day after it was cursed, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig-tree withered away!* they were astonished to see it withered down to the roots, in the space of one day. In answer therefore to Peter’s remark, and to the astonishment which the rest had expressed, Jesus spake to them concerning the efficacy of faith, telling them that if they had faith in God, or the faith of miracles, they should be able to do much greater things than the withering of the fig-tree. Mark xi. 22. *And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God.* 23. *For verily I say unto you (Matt. Ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig-tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain) that whosoever shall say unto this mountain, the mount of Olives on which they were walking, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass, he shall have whatsoever he saith, (Matt. it shall be done).* Matt. xxi. 22. *And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.* Whatsoever miracle you shall ask by faith, ye shall receive. See what is meant by the faith of miracles on Matt. xvii. 20. § 73. To conclude, by giving them direction concerning prayer on this occasion, he insinuated

of incident. I histories introduced in this manner; for instance, the history of John Baptist’s death, which is thus brought in, Matt. xiv. 3. *Ὁ γὰρ Ἡρῶδης κρατεῖται τοῦ Ἰωάννου, ἰδού :* “For Herod having laid hold on John, had bound him, and put him in prison.” See Mark xvi. 7. Luke ix. 46. *Ἐγένετο δὲ διαλογισμὸς :* “Now there had arisen a dispute among them,” viz. on the road to Capernaum; for Mark says expressly that the dispute happened there. See on Luke ix. 46. § 74.



insinuated that prayer was a fit means of increasing the faith which he spake of. Mark xi. 25. *And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any : that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.* 26. *But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.* See on Matt. vi. 14, 15. § 26.

§ CXIII. *Certain Greeks desire to see Jesus.* John xii. 20,—50.

JOHN xii. 20. *And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast.* Τινες Ἕλληνες, the phrase used by the evangelist here, signifies properly, as our translators have rendered it, *certain Greeks*. However, all the Gentiles being thus named by the Jews, it denoted their religion rather than their country. In the present instance, however, the persons called Greeks were not idolatrous Gentiles. For their business at the feast, which was to worship, shews that they were proselytes to the Jewish religion, and cherished expectations of Messiah. But being foreigners, they had never seen Jesus. 21. *The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee\*, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.* Our Lord's fame, and the general opinion which now prevailed, concurred to persuade these proselytes that he might be Messiah; for which reason, they desired an interview with him. 22. *Philip cometh and telleth Andrew : and again, Andrew and Philip told Jesus.* From Philip's not venturing to introduce the men himself, it would appear that there was some difficulty in the case. Perhaps they were only proselytes of the gate, who, according to custom, could not be admitted into the company of Jews, Acts x. 28. 23. *And Jesus answered them saying, The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified,* meaning that he should soon be honoured by the conversion of all the Gentiles. At the same time he told them, that he was to suffer death before he arrived at this glory; and illustrated the necessity of his dying, by the similitude of grain cast into the earth. 24. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground, and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.* As the only way to make grain produce fruit, is to bury it in the ground, so the most proper method of bringing about the conversion and salvation of the world is, that I die and be buried. To omit other things, our Lord's resurrection, the grand miracle on which the truth of Christianity is founded, and by which the conversion of the world was effected, happened in consequence of his death. He told them farther, that as he their Master

\* Ver. 21. *Which was of Bethsaida of Galilee*] This circumstance is mentioned to shew how these men came to apply themselves to Philip. Probably they were Syrophenicians dwelling about Tyre and Sidon, and who having commerce with Galilee, might be acquainted with Philip.



Master was to suffer before his exaltation, so were all they his disciples ; for which reason, they were to expect persecution, firmly resolving to lose even life itself, after his example, when called to do it ; and in that case he promised them a share in his crown and glory. John xii. 25. *He that loveth his life shall lose it, and he that hateth his life* (see on Luke xiv. 26. § 93.) *in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal.* 26. *If any man serve me, let him follow me, and where I am, there shall also my servant be. If any man serve me, him will my Father honour.* Thus Jesus tacitly insinuated that the strangers would be greatly disappointed, if their desire of conversing with him proceeded from a hope of recommending themselves to earthly preferments through his favour.

Having taken a view of his own sufferings, and proposed them as an example to his disciples, the prospect moved him to such a degree, that he uttered his grief in the following doleful words: 27. *Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say ?* accompanying them with a prayer for relief ; *Father, save me from this hour.* Some however understand these words interrogatively : *Shall I say, Father, save me from this hour ?* supposing that the question implies a negation. *But for this cause came I unto this hour.* His praying on this occasion, shews us what is the best method of easing the mind in deep distress. At the same time, as in his prayer, he expressed an entire resignation to the divine will, he has taught us, that although the weakness of human nature may shrink at the first thoughts of suffering, his disciples are not to yield, but ought to fortify themselves by just reflections on the wisdom of God, and on the happy end he proposes by their afflictions. 28. *Father, glorify thy name.* This some consider as a farther expression of resignation, importing, that he was willing to submit to whatever the Father should judge necessary for the manifestation of his perfections. But the answer that was given to this part of Christ's prayer, suggests another meaning ; namely, that he begged God to demonstrate, perhaps by an immediate interposition, the truth of his mission, a full proof thereof being altogether necessary for vindicating the honour of God. Accordingly, the words were no sooner spoken, than a voice from heaven was heard, answering distinctly to this sense of them. *Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again :* I have glorified it by the miracles which thou hast already performed, and will continue to glorify it by other miracles yet to be performed. Accordingly by the miraculous circumstances which accompanied our Lord's crucifixion, but especially by his resurrection from the dead, by his ascension into heaven, and by the effusion of the Holy Ghost upon his apostles, the truth of Christ's pretensions and mission was demonstrated, and the glory of God was greatly advanced.



advanced. The sound of this voice was evidently preternatural, being strong and loud as thunder; but at the same time so articulate, that all who had heard Jesus pray, understood what it said. John xii. 29. *The people therefore that stood by and heard it, said that it thundered; others said an angel spake to him.* None of them took it for a human voice, it being entirely different from any thing they had ever heard. The reflection which Jesus made upon it was, that the voice had spoken, not to assure him of the Father's love, but to confirm them in the belief of his mission. 30. *Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, nor did I pray for it on my own account, but for your sakes.* The farther glorification of the name of God promised to Jesus by the voice, signified the honour that should accrue to God, from the new proofs wherewith his mission was to be adorned, particularly the great miracles of his resurrection from the dead, of the effusion of the Spirit on the first converts, and of the conversion of the Gentile world to the Christian religion.

The subject of our Lord's prayer, and the answer which he received, naturally led him to meditate on the happy effects of his coming into the world, viz. the destruction of Satan's kingdom, and the exaltation of men with himself into heaven. These grand events afforded a prospect that was very reviving, amidst the melancholy thoughts which now afflicted his soul. Wherefore, that his disciples might share with him in the comfort of them, he foretold them as the necessary effects of his sufferings. 31. *Now is the judgment of this world, the time of the destruction of wickedness is come. Now shall the prince of this world be cast out:* The devil, who has so long reigned in the hearts of the children of disobedience, is about to be dethroned. 32. *And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.* 33. *This he said, signifying what death he should die.* Our Lord cannot be supposed in this passage to talk of his own death as a thing uncertain; and therefore ~~we~~ *we* should be translated, *when I am lifted up*, a sense which ~~we~~ *we* has sometimes. See Deut. vii. 1. Judges vi. 3. The people, on hearing Jesus affirm, that he was to be lifted up or crucified, told him that was inconsistent with the character of Messiah, who, according to the law, (so they named the whole of their sacred writings) was never to die, Psal. cx. 4. Dan. ii. 44. vii. 14. 34. *The people answered him, We have heard out of the law, that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou the Son of man must he lift up? Who is this Son of man?* What sort of a Messiah must he be, that is to die. Jesus replied, that *the Light*, meaning himself, would continue with them but a little while longer, for which reason they would do well not to cavil at, but to believe what he said. 35. *Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you, walk while ye have the light:* Improve by my instructions, who am  
the



the light of the world, (see on John viii. 12.) *lest darkness*, i. e. spiritual blindness, *come upon you* by the just judgment of God. Rom. xi. 25. If that should happen to you, ye will be in a miserable condition: *for he that walketh in darkness, knoweth not whither he goeth*, so is in danger of perishing. 36. *While ye have the light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light*: While you enjoy the benefit of my doctrine and miracles, which clearly prove my mission from God, believe on me, for it is thus alone you can become the children of God. *These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did bide himself from them*: he retired privately with his disciples, perhaps to Bethany.

On this occasion the historian observes, that notwithstanding Jesus had wrought many miracles in the presence of the Jews, they generally rejected him, fulfilling Isaiah's prediction, ch. liii. 1. John xii. 37. *But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him.* 38. \* *That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?* He likewise observes, that they could not believe, being such persons as the same prophet describes, ch. vi. 9. 39. *Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again,* 40. *He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts, that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.* See on Matt. xiii. 14. § 49. 41. *These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.* He uttered these remarkable words, when in vision he saw the glory of the Son of God, and the manifestations which he was to make of the divine counsels, and described the effect which these manifestations were to have upon his hearers; for which reason they are a prophetic description of the men of the age in which Jesus lived. But though the greater part of those to whom Christ preached rejected him, his sermons were not altogether unsuccessful; for a number of the chief rulers believed on him. Yet they did not openly profess their faith in him, fearing they might be excommunicated by the Pharisees, whose party was now very powerful both in church and state; for they valued the good opinion of men more than the approbation of God. 42. *Nevertheless, among the chief rulers also, many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees, they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue.* 43. *For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.* Wherefore, to strengthen the faith of such, and to inspire them with courage, 44. *Jesus, on some occasion or other, soon after this, cried and said in the temple, He that believeth on me, believeth not*  
on

\* Ver. 38. *That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled.*] Is here, and in many other passages, ought to be translated *so that*, for it denotes the event spoken of, and not the cause of that event.



on me, but on him that sent me; see John vii. 16. § 76. My doctrine is so evidently from God, that he who believeth on me may more properly be said to believe on God, by whose authority I preach. 45. *And he that seeth me, seeth him that sent me:* He that seeth the miracles which I perform, seeth the operation of his power by whom I act. See John x. 37, 38. § 84. 46. *I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me, should not abide in darkness* I am the Sun of righteousness; whose beams dispel the darkness of ignorance in which men are involved, and am come to deliver all who believe on me out of that darkness. See on John viii. 12. § 77. John xii. 47. *And if any hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not; for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world:* Yet if those who hear my doctrine do not believe, I will not at present execute judgment upon them; for I am not come to condemn and punish, but to save the world; and consequently to use all the gentle methods possible in order to reclaim the wicked. Nevertheless, they who reject the instructions and the offers of salvation which I give, shall not pass unpunished; for the doctrine that I have preached, shall bear witness against them at the day of judgment, and because it has aggravated their sin, it shall heighten their punishment. 48 *He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.* Do not think it strange that you are to be judged according to my doctrine and precepts. 49 *For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak.* 50. *And I know that his commandment is life everlasting; whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.* Because I am sensible that the doctrines and precepts which the Father hath commanded me to preach, are the only conditions of eternal life, I have proposed them with the greatest faithfulness, plainness, and confidence. Therefore, I am worthy of credit, both in respect of my commission, and in respect of the fidelity with which I have executed it.

§ CXIV. *Priests and elders are sent by the senate to ask Jesus concerning his authority. The parable of the sons commanded to work in the vineyard.* Matt. xxi. 23,—32. Mark xi. 27,—33. Luke xix. 47, 48. xx. 1,—8.

JESUS being now to remain but a short time on earth, employed himself, without intermission, in teaching as many people as possible, and in the most public places. Luke xix. 47. *And he taught daily in the temple.* But the chief priests, and the scribes, and the chief of the people, sought to destroy him, 48 *And could not find what they might do; for all the people were very at-*  
tentive



*tentive to bear him.* It seems his sermons made a great impression on those who heard him; for the number of his followers and admirers increased so as to alarm the rulers, who feared that the people on his account would shake off the Roman yoke. They consulted therefore among themselves, how they might kill him, and resolved to do it under pretext of law; the attachment which the multitude had to him, hindering them from laying violent hands on him. See Mark xi. 18. § 112. and Matt. xxi. 46. § 115. In consequence of their resolution, the chief priests, and scribes, and elders, that is, some of the first men of the nation, came, by appointment of the senate, to Jesus one day as he was teaching in the temple, and before all the people put two questions to him. The first was concerning the nature of the authority by which he acted, whether it was as a prophet, a priest, or a king; no other person having a right to make any reformation in church or state. The second question was, That if he claimed the authority of any, or all of these characters, they desired to know from whom he derived it. Luke xx. 1. *And it came to pass, that on one of those days as he taught the people in the temple, and preached the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes came upon him, with the elders (Matt. of the people). 2. And spake unto him, saying, Tell us by what authority dost thou these things? or who is he that gave thee this authority?* Mark xi. 28. *to do these things?* They meant his entering the city with such a numerous train of attendants; his taking upon him to reform the economy of the temple, his receiving the acclamations of the people, who gave him the title of Messiah, &c. Mat. xxi. 24. *And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things. 25. The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men?* Mark xi. 31. *Answer me:* This question reduced the priests to an inextricable dilemma. They considered on the one hand, that if they should acknowledge John's mission from God, it would oblige them to acknowledge Christ's authority; John having more than once borne testimony unto him as the Messiah. *And they reasoned with themselves, saying, if we shall say, From heaven, he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him?* On the other hand, if they denied John's authority, they did not know but the people who stood round them listening to Jesus, might stone them; for they generally believed John to have been a prophet, many of them had submitted to his baptism, and at present not a few held him in high esteem on Christ's account. 26. *But if we shall say, Of men, we fear the people, (Luke, All the people will stone us) for all bold John as a prophet.* Wherefore as matters stood, they judged it safest to answer, that they could not tell whence John's baptism was. By returning this answer, the priests left Jesus at



liberty to decline giving the council the satisfaction they were demanding. That court, whose prerogative it was to judge of prophets, required our Lord to make good his pretensions to the character he assumed. But by the question which he put to them, he obliged them to confess, that they had not been able to pass any judgment upon John Baptist, notwithstanding he claimed the character of a messenger from God, and they had sent to examine his pretensions. This, in effect, was to acknowledge themselves incapable of judging any prophet whatsoever. Ye are come, said he, to inquire into the proofs of my mission; I agree to submit myself to your examination, on condition that you tell me what your determination was concerning John. Was he a true or a false prophet? You say, you don't know. Well. But if you were not able to form a judgment concerning John, how can you take upon you to judge me? In this light, our Lord's question in answer to theirs, appears to have been formed with the greatest address; because, whether the priests replied in the affirmative, or in the negative, or gave no reply at all, they absolutely condemned themselves. 27. *And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell, (Luke, whence it was). And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.* You have no right to ask, since you are not able to judge. For which reason, I will not tell you by what authority I do these things. Besides, Jesus knew very well that they would not have believed, though he had taken the pains to explain and prove his commission; having often done it before to no purpose, at the passovers and other feasts recorded by John.

But because the chief priests and elders had said, that they did not know from whence John's baptism was, Jesus sharply rebuked them for disbelieving him. This reproof he conveyed in the parable of the two sons that were commanded to work in their father's vineyard, and by asking their opinion of the behaviour of the two, made them condemn themselves. Matt. xxi: 28. *But what think you? A certain man had two sons: and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to-day in my vineyard.* 29. *He answered and said, I will not; but afterward he repented, and went.* 30. *And he came to the second, and said likewise, And he answered and said, I go, Sir, and went not.* The temper and behaviour of the second son, was an exact picture of the temper and behaviour of the Pharisees; for in their prayers and praises, they gave God the most honourable titles, and professed the utmost zeal to serve him; but at the same time, would do no part of the work that he enjoined them, and particularly, would not hearken to the Baptist's exhortations. In the character of the other son, the disposition of the tax-gatherers and harlots is well described. They neither professed nor promised to do the will of God; yet, when they came to think seriously, they



they submitted themselves first to John, then to Christ, and, in consequence of their faith, amended their lives. When Jesus had finished the parable, he asked, Matt. xxi. 31. *Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first.* It seems they did not perceive that by this answer they condemned themselves, till Jesus made a direct application of the parable in that sharp but just rebuke: *Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.* 32. For though you pretend that ye do not know from whence John's baptism was, *John came unto you in the way of righteousness*; he clearly proved his mission from God, and ye believed him not: gave no credit to the testimony which he bare to me, and consequently would not go into the vineyard: but the publicans and the harlots believed him, they received his testimony and obeyed the gospel. And ye when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him: When ye had seen persons of the most abandoned characters reformed by his sermons, which doubtless was a strong proof of his mission from God, ye did not repent of your opposition to that holy man, nor of your disobedience to his instructions; at least your remorse was not of such a kind, as to make you afterwards believe him.

The moral reflection suggested by this passage of the history is, that the openly profane are more apt to repent than hypocrites; which experience also shews to be true. The reason is, persons openly profane have nothing by which they can defend themselves against the terrors of God, when once they begin to fasten upon their consciences. Whereas, hypocrites having a form of godliness, screen themselves therewith from all the attacks that can be made upon them, by the strongest arguments drawn, whether from reason, or from the word of God.

§ CXV. *The parable of the vineyard that was let out to husbandmen.* Matt. xxi. 33,—46. Mark xii. 1,—12. Luke xx. 9,—19.

OUR Lord did not rest satisfied with shewing the rulers the heinousness of their sin in rejecting the Baptist. He judged it proper likewise, publicly to represent the crime of the nation, in rejecting all the messengers of God from first to last, and among the rest, his only begotten Son; and in misimproving the Mosaic dispensation, under which they lived. At the same time, he warned them plainly of their danger, by reason of the punishment which they incurred, on account of such a continued course of rebellion. The outward economy of religion in which they gloried was to be taken from them, their relation to God as his people cancelled, and their national constitution destroyed. But because these were topics extremely disagreeable, he couched them



them under the veil of a parable, which he formed upon one made use of long before by the prophet, Isaiah v. 1. Matt. xxi. 33. *Hear another parable.* (Luke, *Then began he to speak to the people this parable.* Mark, *And he began to speak unto them by parables.*) There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and bedged it round about, and digged a wine press in it, (Mark, a place for the wine fat) and built a tower, that is, a house for lodging the wine-dressers, and watching the vineyard, for which reason, it was built so high as to have a prospect of the whole vineyard. The vineyard, with its appurtenances, represents the Mosaical dispensation of religion, a dispensation that was attended with great present advantages, and had many promises of future blessings; and let it out to husbandmen, bestowed this excellent dispensation of religion on the Jewish people, and went into a far country, (Luke, *for a long time*) gave them the enjoyment of this dispensation of religion for a long time. 34. *And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants* (Mark, Luke, *a servant*) *to the husbandmen: that they might receive the fruits of it.* He sent the prophets to exhort the Jews to entertain just sentiments in religion, and to lead holy lives, these being the returns due from persons who enjoyed so clear a revelation of the divine will. 35. *And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another.* Mark gives this branch of the parable more fully, xii. 3. *And they caught him, and beat him, and sent him away empty.* 4. *And again he sent unto them another servant, and at him they cast stones, and wounded him in the head, and sent him away shamefully bundled* 5. *And again he sent another, and him they killed.* In this passage Mark and Luke agree. See the Harmony. The meaning is, that the Jews, extremely irritated at the prophets for the freedom they used in reproving their sins, and exhorting them to a holy life, persecuted and slew them with unrelenting fury. 36. *Again he sent other servants more than the first, and they did unto them likewise.* (Mark, *and many others, beating some and killing some.*) The wickedness of the Jews in killing the prophets, did not provoke God instantly to pour down vengeance on them; but being very merciful and patient toward the nation, he sent more prophets to exhort and reclaim them. However, they met with no better treatment than the former. 37. *But last of all he sent unto them his Son, saying, They will reverence my Son.* (Luke 13. *Then said the Lord of the vineyard, What shall I do? I will send my beloved Son; it may be they will reverence him when they see him.* Mark, *Having yet therefore one Son, his well-beloved, he sent him also last unto them, saying, They will reverence my Son*) That no means might be left untried, God sent unto them his own Son, whose authority, clearly established by undeniable miracles, ought to have



have been acknowledged with cheerfulness by these wicked men. Matt. xxi. 38. *But when the husbandmen saw the Son, they said (Luke, reasoned) among themselves, This is the heir, come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance (Luke, that the inheritance may be ours).* From this it would seem, that the Jews knew Jesus to be the Son of God. Yet Peter says, both of the rulers and the people, that they crucified the Lord ignorantly, Acts iii. 17. Perhaps, therefore, like the other circumstance of their seizing on the inheritance, it may have been added, for the sake of completing the parable, without any particular design. Matthew and Luke say, the husbandmen cast the Son out of the vineyard, and killed him. 39. *And they caught him, laid hands on him, and cast him out of the vineyard and slew him.* Luke xx. 15. *So they cast him out of the vineyard and killed him.* Mark says, they first killed him and then cast him out, xii. 8. *And they took him and killed him, and cast him out of the vineyard.* But his meaning may have been this; they so beat and bruised him before they cast him out, that he could not live, and, after having cast him out, they completed the murder, killing him outright. The manner in which Mark has expressed it, insinuates, that after they had killed him, they threw out his body, without burial, to the dogs; a circumstance which does not seem to have any particular meaning, but is formed to shew the greatness of the rebellion of these husbandmen. Luke, *What therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them?* According to Mark and Luke, Jesus answered this question himself. Luke xx. 16. *He will come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others;* for Luke adds, *And when they (the priests) heard it, they said, God forbid.* But Matthews seems to say, that the priests answered the question, xxi. 40. *When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?* 41. *They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.* This apparent inconsistency may be reconciled, by supposing, that after they had said to him, *God forbid*, as Luke tells us, they repeated his words ironically: *He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen:* speaking with a tone of voice expressive of the disposition of their mind, then added contemptuously, *which shall render him the fruits in their seasons*, which shall behave better no doubt than we have done; for they understood his parables, and designed to affront him by ridiculing what he said. Besides, unless the priests had spoken these things ironically, the answer which Matthew himself tells us Jesus returned to them was improper, because it implied that the priests had denied the vineyard was to be taken from them, and given to others. Matt. xxi. 42. *Jesus saith to them,*



them, *Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner?* If the vineyard is not to be taken from you and given to others, what is the meaning of Psal. cxviii. 22.? Does not that passage of Scripture plainly foretel, that the Messiah shall be rejected by the Jewish great men; and that though they crucify him, he shall become the head of the corner, or head of the church? Now, what else is this, but that he shall be believed on by the Gentiles, and unite them to the church of God, as a head corner-stone unites the two sides of a building? Accordingly, Luke expresses the connection of our Lord's answer with their denial more clearly thus: xx. 17. *And he beheld them and said, What is this then that is written, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner?* Matt. xxi. *This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes:* The rejection of Messiah by the Jews, the reception he met with among the Gentiles, and their admission into the church, are all brought to pass by the providence of God, and are very wonderful events. 43. *Therefore I say unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.* For the reason that God himself has long ago expressly foretold this judgment as to happen you, and because it is a most righteous and equitable judgment, I assure you it will fall upon you, however much you may make a mock of it. The outward economy of religion, which you have long enjoyed very unprofitably, shall be taken from you, and given to the Gentiles, who, whatever you may think of them, will improve it far better than you have done. These words confirm the interpretation given above of Matt. xxi. 41. For had the priests spoken seriously, our Lord needed not have been at the pains to produce texts of scripture to prove what they had so fully acknowledged. 44. *And whosoever shall fall on this stone, which the builders have rejected, but which God will make the head of the corner, shall be broken;* see Rom. ix. 33. Whosoever ignorantly opposes Messiah, shall thereby receive great harm to himself, in allusion to one's stumbling on a stone thrown aside as useless, *but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.* Our Lord seems here to have had in view Dan. ii. 34. where the destruction of all the opposers of Messiah's kingdom is described thus: "*Thou sawest till that a stone was cut without hands, which smote the image upon his feet, that were of iron and clay, and brake them in pieces.*" 35. *Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floor, and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them; and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the earth.*" Our Lord's meaning is, that all the opposers of  
Messiah's



Messiah's kingdom, called, ver. 43. *the kingdom of God*, and by Daniel, *the kingdom of the God of heaven*, ii. 44. shall be utterly destroyed according to Daniel's vision of the image. The first clause of Matt. xxi. 44. seems to describe the sin and punishment of the common people, who were misled by their teachers to oppose Christ; the second describes the sin and punishment of the great men, who, being chiefs in the rebellion, led the way to the rest, and had an active hand in resisting the authority of Messiah.

The chief priests perceiving the drift of our Lord's parables, were highly incensed, and would gladly have apprehended him, to punish him that moment; but they durst not: It is true, they were not afraid of God, who is the avenger of such crimes, but they were afraid of the people, who constantly crowded round Jesus in the temple, and had openly acknowledged him as Messiah. Matt. xxi. 45. *And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them, (Mark, Luke, had spoken this parable against them.)* 46. *But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet.* See on Luke xix. 48. § 114.

§ CXVI. *The parable of the marriage-supper is delivered the second time.* See § 92. Matt. xxii. 1,—14. Mark xii. 12.

THE rulers being afraid to apprehend Jesus, he was at liberty to proceed in the duties of his ministry. Accordingly he delivered another apologue, wherein he described on the one hand the bad success which the preaching of the gospel was to have among the Jews, who, for that reason, were to be destroyed; and on the other, the cheerful reception it was to meet with among the Gentiles, who thereupon were to be admitted into the church of God. Matt. xxii. 1. *And Jesus answered, and spake unto them again by parables, and said, (see the form and circumstances of this parable explained on Luke xiv. 16. § 92.)* 2. *The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which \* made a marriage-supper for his son.* God's gracious design in giving the gospel to men, and the success with which the preaching of it will be attended, may be illustrated by the behaviour of a certain king, who, in honour of his son, made a great feast, to which he invited many guests. This marriage-supper, or great feast, signifies the joys of heaven, Rev. xix. 9. which are fitly compared to an elegant entertainment, on account of their exquisiteness, fulness and duration. \*And they are here said to be prepared in honour

\* Ver. 2. *Made a marriage, &c.*] The word *γᾶμος* not only signifies a marriage, but the feast at a marriage, or any great entertainment, whatever; in which latter sense it seems to be used here, as I think may be gathered from the moral meaning of the parable.



honour of the Son of God, because they are bestowed on men as the reward of his obedience. *Matt. xxii. 3. And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding.* The invitation which preceded the call at the hour of supper, signifies the vocation of the Jews, by which they became the people of God, and in consequence of which, they had the call given them at the hour, that is, when the fulness of time approached, had the gospel, the call to the great feast of heaven, preached to them, first by John Baptist, and next by Jesus himself. *And they would not come:* The Jews, though pressed by the preaching both of Messiah's forerunner, and of Messiah himself, to enter into heaven, would not obey; for they rejected the gospel. 4. *Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready; come unto the marriage.* After Christ's resurrection and ascension, the apostles were sent forth to inform the Jews that the gospel-covenant was established, mansions in heaven were prepared, and that nothing was wanting, but that they would cheerfully accept of the honour designed them. 5. *But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise:* 6. *And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them:* These messengers were as unsuccessful as the former ones. The men all undervaluing the favour offered them, mocked at the message, and went about their business; only some of them, more rude than the rest, insulted, beat, and slew the servants that had come to call them. The success of the call, and the treatment which the king's servants met with, was designed to represent the ill success which the gospel and its ministers might expect among the Jews, who anciently were God's elected people, and on that account were to have the first offers of the gospel made to them. They would generally reject it, preferring their farms, their merchandise, and other gainful employments, to the practice of piety, the favour of God, and the enjoyment of heaven. Nay, to obstinacy they would add insults and cruelty, persecuting unto death the ministers who exhorted them to believe. The invitation to the marriage-supper of his son, sent by this king to his supposed friends, was the highest expression of his regard for them, and the greatest honour that could be done to them. Therefore when they refused it for such trifling reasons, and were so savagely ungrateful as to beat, and wound, and kill, the servants who had come with it, it was a most outrageous affront, an injury that deserved the severest punishment. Accordingly the king, in great wrath, sent forth his armies to destroy those murderers, and burn their city. 7. *But when the king heard thereof, \* he was wroth:* and

\* Ver. 7. *He was wroth, &c.*] It is needless to object that the circumstances



*and sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burnt up their city.* This branch of the parable plainly predicted the destruction of the Jews by the Roman armies, called God's armies, because they were appointed by him to execute vengeance on that once favourite, but now rebellious people. Mat. xxii. 8. *Then said he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy.* What Paul and Barnabas said to the Jews of Antioch in Pisidia, may fitly be produced here, as the accomplishment of this part of the parable, Acts xiii. 46. "Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo we turn to the Gentiles. 47. For so hath the Lord commanded us." 9. *Go ye therefore into the high-ways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.* 10. *So those servants went out into the high-way, and gathered together all, as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests.* In this latter part of the parable, the calling of the Gentiles is represented by the king's servants going forth and compelling all they met to come in, (see Luke xiv. 21. § 92.) whether they were maimed or blind, or halt, worthy or unworthy, good or bad; for they made no distinction. 11. *And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding-garment.* It seems that before the guests were admitted into the hall of entertainment, they were taken into some apartment of the palace, where the king viewed them, to see that they were all dressed in a manner suitable to the occasion. Here he found one that had not on a wedding-garment, and being provoked at the affront, he ordered him to be immediately thrust out of the palace, and to be cast bound into some dark prison, there to lie with other criminals in great misery. 12. \* *And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither,*

stances of this parable are improbable; as it was never heard of in the world, that subjects refused the invitation of their sovereign to the marriage of his son. For allowing this to be so, it only aggravates the crime of the Jews the more, with respect to whom it was literally true. The honour which God offered them in the gospel, and which they rejected, being far greater than the honour that is put on a subject by the invitation of his prince. Moreover, the joys of heaven, which they were called to, and which they refused, do infinitely transcend the pleasures of any royal banquet.

\* Ver. 12. *And he saith unto him, &c.*] It may seem strange, that in such a number of men gathered to this feast, there was only one found who had not on a wedding garment, and that he should have been punished with such severity for wanting what he could not be expected to have, considering that he was compelled to come, while he was performing a journey perhaps, or sitting begging under the hedges, as appears from Luke xiv. 13. Nevertheless, the heinousness of his offence, and the equity of the



*ther, how durst thou come in, not having a wedding-garment? and he was speechless. 13. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

**This**

the sentence that was passed upon him, will fully appear, if we call to mind a circumstance, which because it was commonly known at that time, is not mentioned in the parable. The Easterns, among whom the fashion of clothes was not changeable as with us, reckoned it a principal part of their magnificence, to have their wardrobes stored with rich habits. Thus Job, speaking of the wicked, says, chap. xxvii. 16. "Though they heap up silver as the dust, and prepare raiment as the clay." Accordingly, in Scripture, when the uncertainty of earthly treasures is spoken of, they are represented as subject not only to rust, but to moths, Matt. vi. 19. James v. 3. The matter is evident likewise from Horace; for he tells us, that when Lucullus, the Roman general, who had enriched himself with the spoils of the East, was asked if he could furnish a hundred habits for the theatre, he replied, he had five thousand in his house, of which they were welcome to take part or all.

——chlamydes Lucullus, ut aiunt.

Si posset centum sceleræ præbere rogatus,

Qui possum tot? ait: tamen et quæram, et quot habebo

Mittam: post paulo scribit, sibi milia quinque

Esse domi chlamydem, partem vel tolleret omnes.

We may therefore naturally enough suppose, that this king having invited guests to his feast, from the high-ways and hedges, would order his servants to make each of them a present of splendid apparel, as a farther mark of his respect. and that they might be all clothed in a manner becoming the magnificence of the solemnity. For it cannot otherwise be understood, how among such a number, collected in such a manner, only one should have been found wanting a wedding garment, especially as we are told, that they gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good. Besides, that the great men of the East were wont to make ostentation of their grandeur, and to express their respect for their favourites by gifts of this kind, is evident from the presents which Joseph bestowed on his brethren in Egypt, Gen. xlv. 22. "He gave each man changes of raiment; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver, and five changes of raiment." It appears likewise from the agreement which Samson entered into with the guests at his marriage-feast, Judges xiv. 12. "Samson said unto them, I will now put forth a riddle unto you; if you can certainly declare it me within the seven days of the feast, and find it out, then will I give you thirty sheets, and thirty change of garments. 13. But if ye cannot declare it me, then shall ye give me thirty sheets, and thirty change of garments." To conclude, in the fourth Odyssey, ver. 47,—51. Homer tells us, that Telemachus and Pisistratus happening to arrive at Menelaus' house in Lacedæmon, while he was solemnizing the nuptials of his son and daughter, the maids of the house washed the strangers, anointed them, dressed them, and set them down by their master at table. Without all doubt therefore, the man that was sentenced to be bound and cast out of doors, had been offered a wedding garment, or sumptuous apparel, along with the rest, but would not receive it, and so haughtily came in dirty and ragged as he was. The king looking on this as a great insult, inflicted upon the person that was guilty of it, a punishment suitable to the demerit of his offence.

What Calvin says concerning the wedding garment in the parable, deserves



This member of the parable represents the last judgment, and teaches us, that though the Gentiles obeyed the call of the gospel with more alacrity than the Jews, they should not all be saved by it.

Our Lord concluded this parable as he had done that of the labourers in the vineyard. Matt. xxii. 14. *For many are called, but few are chosen.* Which words are proverbial, and must be referred first to the Jews, who, though they were called in great numbers by the preaching of the gospel, few of them were chosen, for they did not believe; see on Matt. xx. 16. § 105. They must be referred also to the Gentiles, who though they embraced the gospel, many of them rejected the wedding garment when it was offered to them. The parable is concluded in this manner to shew us, that the profession of the Christian religion will not save a man, unless he lives in a manner worthy of that religion. Wherefore, to use the words of Dr Doddridge, let us who have obeyed the call, and are by profession the people of God, think often of that awful day, when the king will come in to see his guests; when God will, with the greatest strictness, view every soul laying claim to the joys of heaven; let us think of the speechless confusion that will seize such as have not on the wedding-garment, and of the inexorable severity with which they will be consigned to weeping and gnashing of teeth; and let us remember, that to have seen for a while the light of the gospel, and the fair beamings of an eternal hope, will add deeper and more sensible horrors to these gloomy caverns. On the other hand, to animate and encourage us, let us think also on the happy time when the marriage-supper of the Lamb shall be celebrated, and all the harmony, pomp, and beauty of heaven shall add to its solemnity, its magnificence, and its joys.

Mark xii. 12. *And they left him, and went their way.* The chief priests, and scribes, and elders, had come, by order of the senate, to examine his pretensions. They made no doubt but they would be able fully to confute them. They therefore chose to attack him in the temple, while he was surrounded with a great crowd of followers and admirers, whose eyes they proposed

serves a place here. "It is needless to dispute about the wedding-garment, whether it be faith or a pious holy life. For neither can faith be separated from good works, nor can good works proceed except from faith. Christ's meaning is only that we are called in order that we may be renewed in our minds after his image. And therefore, that we may remain always in his house, the old man, with his filthiness, must be put off, and a new life designed, that our attire may be such as is suitable to so honourable an invitation." Doddridge observes, that this circumstance of the parable is admirably adapted to the method of God's dealing with us. For he requires repentance indeed, and holiness, in order to our partaking of the happiness of heaven; but at the same time, he graciously offers to work it in us, by his holy Spirit; and therefore may justly punish our neglect of so great a favour.



fed to open ; but their project issued in their own confusion, for the very first sentence which Jesus spake in return to their question concerning his mission, absolutely silenced them all, though they were the most learned men of the nation. And the description which in his three parables he gave of their sin and punishment as the depositaries of divine revelation, so abashed them, that they went away without saying a word more to him about his authority and mission.

§ CXVII. *Concerning the lawfulness of paying tribute.* Matt. xxii. 15,—22. Mark xii. 13,—17. Luke xx. 20,—26.

THE parable of the marriage-supper incensed the Pharisees to such a degree, that they went immediately, and combined with the Herodians or Sadducees, (see Jewish Antiq. Disc. i. chap. 4. § 1.) in order to put him to death. Matt. xxii. 15. *Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk.* 16. *And they sent out unto him their disciples* (Mark, *certain of the Pharisees*) *with the Herodians,* (Mark, *to catch him in his words.*) It seems their hatred of Jesus was more violent than the bitter enmity that had been long rooted in the breasts of the two sects against each other. Having therefore resolved to send certain of their disciples to catch him in his words, they directed them to *feign themselves just men*, men who had a great veneration for the divine law, and dread of doing any thing inconsistent therewith ; and under that mask to beg him, for the ease of their consciences, to give his opinion whether they might pay taxes to the Romans consistently with their zeal for religion. It seems this question was much debated in our Lord's time ; one Judas of Galilee having taught the unlawfulness of paying the taxes, and gathered a numerous faction, especially among the common people. The priests, therefore, imagined that it was not in his power to decide the point without making himself obnoxious to some of the parties who had divided upon it. If he should say it was lawful to pay the taxes, they believed the people in whose hearing the question was proposed (see Luke, ver. 26.) would be incensed against him, not only as a base pretender, who, on being attacked, publicly renounced the character of Messiah \*, which he had assumed among his friends ; but as a flatterer of princes also, and a betrayer of the liberties of his country, one that taught doctrines inconsistent with the known privileges of the people of God. But if he should affirm that it was unlawful to pay, the Herodians resolved to inform the governor

\* The notion which the generality of the nation formed of Messiah was, that he would deliver them from foreign servitude. If therefore he, who called himself Messiah, recommended the paying of taxes to the Romans, this they thought was inconsistent with his pretensions, nay, it was a renouncing of them altogether.



vernor of it, who they hoped would punish him as a fomentor of sedition. Luke xx. 20. *And they watched him, and sent forth spies which should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor.* Highly elated therefore with their project, they came and proposed the question, after having first passed an encomium on the truth of his mission, and upon his courage, integrity, and impartiality, with a design, no doubt, to make him believe that they were his friends, and that he ought boldly to declare what the will of God was in the matter. Mark xii. 14. *And when they were come, they say unto him, Master, we know that thou art true, (Luke, that thou sayest and teachest rightly) and carest for no man; for thou regardest (Luke, acceptest) not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth.* Matt. xxii. 17. *Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cesar or not?* (Mark, *Shall we give, or shall we not give?*) 18. *But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?* He called them hypocrites, to signify, that though they made conscience, and a regard to the divine will, their pretence for asking the question, he saw through their design, and knew that they were come to ensnare him. However, said he, 19. *Shew me the tribute-money.* *And they brought unto him a penny.* 20. *And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription?* 21. *They say unto him, Cesar's.* It seems the Romans chose to receive this tribute in their own coin. Then saith he unto them, *Render therefore unto Cesar the things which are Cesar's.* The Jews were so tenacious of the customs of their country, and had so high an opinion of their own holiness, that they would not make use of heathen money, as appears from the business of the money-changers mentioned in the gospels. Probably it was for this reason that the Romans insisted on having the taxes paid in their own coin, because, by making it current, they taught the Jews that they were their masters. Hence the force of our Lord's argument appears. Since this money bears Cesar's image, it is his; and by making use of it, ye acknowledge his authority. If so, I leave it to yourselves to judge whether tribute ought to be paid toward the support of that government, which ye have acknowledged, which ye cannot shake off, and by which your tranquillity is preserved. That this was our Lord's meaning, appears from the illative particle *therefore*, by which his answer is connected with the Pharisees question: "They say unto him, Cesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Cesar."—Having thus declared the lawfulness of paying taxes to the civil powers, he ordered them at the same time to be careful to pay to God what was his due, as their Maker and Preserver: *Render therefore unto Cesar the things that are Cesar's; and unto*

*God*



*God the things that are God's.* In discharging your duty to the civil magistrate, you should never depart from the duty you owe to God; but should remember, that as you bear the image of the great King omnipotent, you are his subjects, and ought to pay him the tribute of yourselves; that is, ought to yield yourselves to him, soul and body, serving him with both, to the utmost of your power. The Pharisees, and their adherents, under pretence of religion, often justified sedition; but the Herodians, in order to ingratiate themselves with the reigning powers, made them a compliment of their consciences, complying with whatever they enjoined, although directly contrary to the divine law. Our Lord therefore when he returned this answer, had both in his view exhorting them in their regards to God and the magistrate, to give each his due; because there is no inconsistency between their rights, when nothing but their rights are insisted on.

Thus the crafty counsel, formed by the opposite factions for discrediting Jesus with the people, was of none effect. Luke xx. 26. *And they could not take bold of his words before the people.* Moreover, Matt. xxii. 22. *When they had heard these words, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way.* Luke xx. 26. *They marvelled at his answer, and held their peace.* Mark, *They marvelled at him.* So unexpected an answer, in which Jesus clearly confuted them on their own principles, and shewed that the rights of God and the magistrate do not interfere in the least, because magistrates are God's deputies, and rule by his authority, quite disconcerted and silenced those crafty enemies. They were astonished at his having perceived their design, as well as at the wisdom by which he avoided the snare, and went off inwardly vexed, and not a little ashamed.

§ CXVIII. *The Sadducees are confuted.* Matt. xxii. 23,—33. Mark xii. 18,—27. Luke xx. 27,—38.

AND now enemies issue forth against Jesus from different quarters. But the first that renewed the attack were the Sadducees, a sect which denied the existence of angels and spirits, Acts xxiii. 8. See Jewish Ant. Disc. i. ch. 4. § 1. and consequently affirmed, that there would be no future state. Some of this persuasion therefore coming up to Jesus as he taught in the temple, proposed their strongest argument against the resurrection. Matt. xxii. 23. *The same day came to him the Sadducees, (Luke, certain of the Sadducees) which say that there is \* no resurrection.* The

\* Matt. 23. *No resurrection*] Some are of opinion, that by the resurrection which the Sadducees denied, is to be understood the resurrection of the body. Others contend that it signifies simply the existence of men in a future state. Properly speaking, however, the two notions coincide; for as the Sadducees denied the immateriality of the soul, a future state, according



The argument by which the Sadducees endeavoured to confute the notion of a resurrection, was taken from the Jewish law of marriage, which, to give their objection the better colour, they observed was God's law, delivered by Moses. Luke xx. *And they asked him, 28. Saying, Master, Moses wrote unto us, (Matt. said) If any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, (Mark, die, and leave his wife behind him, and leave no children) that his brother should take (Matt. marry) his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. 29 There were therefore seven brethren. (Matt. with us); and the first took a wife, and died without children (Matt. deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother). 30. And the second took her to wife, and he died childless. 31. And the third took her; and in like manner the seven also. And they left no children, and died. 32. Last of all the woman died also. 33. Therefore in the resurrection (here the word evidently signifies a future state simply. Mark, in the resurrection therefore when they shall rise) whose wife of them is she? for seven had her to wife. As the Sadducees believed the soul to be nothing but a more refined kind of matter, they thought if there was any future state, it must resemble the present; and that men being in that state material and mortal, the human race could not be continued, nor the individuals made happy, without the pleasures and conveniencies of marriage. Hence they affirmed it to be a necessary consequence of the doctrine of the resurrection or future state, that every man's wife should be restored to him. This argument Jesus confuted, by telling the Sadducees, that they were ignorant of the power of God, who has created spirit as well as matter, and who can make men completely happy in the enjoyment of himself. He observed farther, that the nature of the life obtained in the future state, makes marriage altogether superfluous, because, in the world to come, men being spiritual and immortal like the angels (*αγγέλων*), there is no need of procreation, to propagate or continue the kind. Matt. xxii. 29. *Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God. (Mark, Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the Scriptures, neither the power of God?) Luke xx. 34. The children of this**

according to their conceptions of it, could mean nothing else but the resurrection of the body; and their denying the resurrection of the body, was the same thing with their denying a future state. Withal, as they had no idea of spirit, they were obliged to make use of terms relative to the body, when they spake of an after-life. Hence came the familiar use of the word *resurrection* in their disputes, to denote a future state simply; and this sense of it is not more unusual than the meaning which they ascribed to the word *dead*, when they made it signify persons annihilated, or who have no existence at all; see Luke xx. 38. Our Lord's reasonings in behalf of a future state, against the Sadducean arguments, placed in this view, are clear and conclusive. But the resurrection of the body, in the literal sense, does not so plainly follow from them.



*this world, the inhabitants of this world, marry, and are given in marriage.* 35. *But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, (Mark, when they shall rise from the dead) neither marry nor are given in marriage.* 36. *Neither can they die any more; for they are equal unto the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection:* They in some degree partake of the felicity and immortality of God himself, blessings which they obtain by being raised from the dead. From this latter clause, it is plain that our Lord is here, speaking of the resurrection of the just, who are called God's children on account of the inheritance bestowed on them at the resurrection, and particularly on account of their being dignified with immortality.

Having thus demonstrated that they were ignorant of the power of God, Jesus shewed the Sadducees that they were ignorant of the Scriptures likewise, and particularly of the writings of Moses, from whence they had drawn their objection; for out of the law itself he demonstrated the certainty of a resurrection, at least of just men, and thereby quite overturned the opinion of the Sadducees, who, believing the materiality of the soul, affirmed, that men were annihilated at death, and that the writings of Moses supported their opinion. See Jewish Antiq. Disc. i. ch. 2. § 2. His argument was this: As a man cannot be a father without children, nor a king without subjects, so God cannot properly be called God, unless he has his people, and be Lord of the living. Since therefore in the law he calls himself the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, long after these patriarchs were dead, the relation denoted by the word *God* still subsisted between them; for which reason, they were not annihilated, as the Sadducees pretended, when they affirmed that they were dead, but were still in being, God's subjects, and covenanted people. Luke xx. 37. *Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.* (Mark, *And as touching the dead, that they rise, have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him? (Mat. unto you) saying, I am the God of Abraham, &c.*) 38. *For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living; for all live unto him, i. e. live subject to his government.* Mark xii. 27. *Ye do therefore greatly err.* It cannot be objected to this interpretation, that it lays too much stress on the words *I am*, which are not in the Hebrew. For our Lord's application of the citation in the present tense, *He is not the God of the dead*, plainly implies, that no other tense of the substantive verb can be supplied. Others, however, chuse to explain the argument thus: To be the God of any person, is to be his exceeding great reward, Gen. xv. 1. Wherefore, as the patriarchs died without having obtained the

promises



promises, Heb. xi. 39. they must exist in another state to enjoy them, that the veracity of God may remain sure. Besides, the apostle tells us, that God is not ashamed to be called their God, because he has prepared for them a city, Heb. xi. 16. which implies, that he would have reckoned it infinitely beneath him, to own his relation, as God, to any one, for whom he had not provided a state of permanent happiness. The argument taken either way, is conclusive; for which cause, we may suppose, that both the senses of it were intended, to render it full of demonstration. Accordingly, the people were most agreeably surprised, when they heard such a clear and solid confutation of the sect which they abominated, and that too in an argument where they had always thought themselves impregnable. Matt. xxii. 33. *And when the multitude heard this, they were astonished at his doctrine.*

§ CXIX. *One of the Scribes asks Jesus which is the great commandment in the law.* See § 82. 105. Matt. xxii. 34,—40. Mark xii. 28,—34. Luke xx. 39, 40.

ALTHOUGH the Pharisees had come with the malicious intention mentioned § 117. when they heard the doctrine of the resurrection so clearly established from the law itself, and found their pestilent adversaries, the Sadducees, thus silenced, they could not help being highly pleased, nor restrain themselves from giving him the praise that was due to his super-eminent wisdom. For one of them who was a scribe, or public teacher, (see on Luke xi. 44. § 87.) desired Jesus to give his opinion on another point that was much debated among the doctors, namely, Which was the great commandment in the law. Mark xii. 28. *And one of the Scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all?* Matthew says, xxii. 34. *But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together:* They retired a little from the crowd, probably to express the satisfaction they had received from the confutation of their adversaries. He says likewise, that *one of them*, which was a lawyer, proposed the question concerning the great commandment, *tempting* him. He does not mean, that their design was insidious, for the question was not of that nature; besides, Mark's account forbids such an interpretation. But they proposed it with a view to make a farther trial of his skill in the sacred volume. Some of the doctors declared, that the law of sacrifices was the great commandment, because sacrifices are both the expiations of sin, and thanksgivings for mercies; others bestowed this honour on the law of circumcision, because it was the sign of the covenant established between God and the nation; a third sort yielded it to the law of the Sabbath, because



by that appointment both the knowledge and practice of the institutions of Moses were preserved ; and, to name no more, there were some who affirmed the law of meats and washings to be of the greatest importance, because thereby the people of God were effectually separated from the company and conversation of the heathens ; but Jesus, with better reason, decided in favour of the duties of piety, mentioning particularly that comprehensive summary of it found in Deut. vi. 4. Mark xii. 29. *And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God is one Lord ; 30. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, (see ver. 33.) and with all thy strength.* The most important of all the commandments is that which enjoins the belief and profession of the unity of God, together with the inward worship, the worship of the spirit or whole soul, that is due to him from men. *This is the first (Matt. and great) commandment :* as this is the first in order, so it is the greatest commandment in the law \*.

Moreover,

\* It is remarkable, that the above summary of piety begins with an emphatical and strong assertion of the unity of God. The reason is, it is necessary that men should be deeply impressed with just notions of the object of their worship, particularly that he is the only true God, the maker of heaven and earth, and the possessor of all perfection, to whom there is not any being equal, or like, or second in order that they may apply themselves, with the utmost diligence, to obey his precepts, the first and chief of which is, that they give him their heart. The divine Being is so transcendently amiable in himself, and by the benefits he hath conferred on us, hath such a title to our utmost affection, that there is no obligation that bears any proportion to that of loving him. The honour assigned to this precept proves, that piety is the noblest act of the human mind, and that the chief ingredient in piety is love; founded on a clear extensive view of the divine perfections, a permanent sense of his benefits, and a deep conviction of his being the sovereign good, our portion, our happiness. But it is essential to love, that there be a delight in contemplating the beauty of the object beloved, whether that beauty be matter of sensation or reflection ; that we frequently, and with pleasure, reflect on the benefits which the object of our affection has conferred on us ; that we have a strong desire of pleasing him, great fear of doing any thing to offend him, and a sensible joy in the thought of being beloved in return. Hence the duties of devotion, prayer, and praise, are the most natural and genuine exercises of the love of God. Moreover, this virtue is not so much any single affection, as the continual bent of all the affections and powers of the soul. In which light, to love God, is, as much as possible, to direct the whole soul towards God, and to exercise all its faculties on him as its chief object. Accordingly, the love of God is described in Scripture by the several operations of the mind ; *the knowledge of God*, John xvii. 3. *a following hard after God*, Psal. lxxiii. 8. namely, by intense contemplation ; *a sense of his perfections*, *gratitude* for his benefits, *trust* in his goodness, *attachment* to his service, *resignation* to his providence ; *the obeying of his commandments*, *admiration* *hope* *fear* *joy*, &c. not because it consists in any one of these singly, but in them all together. For to content ourselves with partial regards to the supreme Being, is not to be affected towards him in the manner



Moreover, Jesus told the Pharisee, that the commandment enjoining love to our neighbour holds the second place in the law. This indeed had no direct relation to his question concerning the first commandment; yet our Lord thought fit to shew him which was the second, probably because the men of his sect did not acknowledge the importance and precedency of love to their neighbours, or because they were remarkably deficient in the practice of it, as Jesus himself had often found, by their repeated attempts to kill him. Matt. xxii. 39. *And the second is like unto it, \* Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.* Mark xii. 31. *There is none other commandment greater than these.* Matt. xxii. 40. *On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets;* These are the substance or abridgment of all the moral duties

ner we ought to be, and which the perfections of his nature claim. Hence the words of the precept are, "Thou shalt love with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength;" that is, with the joint force of all thy faculties; and therefore no idol whatsoever must partake of the love and worship that is due to God. But the beauty and excellency of this state of the mind is best seen in its effects; for the worship and obedience flowing from such an universal bent of the soul towards God, is as much superior to the worship and obedience arising from partial considerations, as the light of the sun is to any picture of it that can be drawn. For example, if we look on God only as a stern lawgiver, who can and will punish our rebellion, it may indeed force an awe and dread of him, and as much obedience to his laws, as we think will satisfy him, but can never produce that constancy in our duty, that delight in it, and that earnestness to do it in its utmost extent, which are produced and maintained in the mind by the sacred fire of divine love, or by the bent of the whole soul turned towards God; a frame the most excellent that can be conceived, and the most to be desired, because it constitutes the highest perfection and happiness of the creature. See § 82. 105. where the means of obtaining eternal life are explained by Jesus.

\* Ver. 39. *Thou shalt love thy neighbour, &c.*] The precept enjoining the love of our neighbour, is like to the great commandment, which enjoins the love of God, because charity is the sister of piety, clearly proving its relation by the similarity of its features, complexion, and temper. As piety is the offspring of God, so is its sister charity, being enjoined by the same authority, and produced by the influence of the same spirit. Piety and charity consist of the like motions and dispositions of soul, (see § 123.) and are kept alive by the same kind of nourishment; the beauties of moral excellence appearing, whether in the great Father, or in his children who bear his image. They have the same happy tendency to make those in whom they reside like God, who is God by being good, and doing good; like him also in his felicity, which arises not only from the possession, but from the communication of his goodness. They are like to each other in their sublime and important nature, and of like use in the conduct of life; the one being the principle from which the whole duty we owe to God must spring; the other, that from which the whole duty we owe to man must flow. To conclude, they have alike power on the minds of the beholders, raising both esteem and love wherever they appear in their genuine beauty. These are the features by which piety and charity are strongly marked, by which their affinity to each other is clearly proved, and by which they are rendered sister graces, and inseparable companions.



duties contained in the law and the prophets ; and therefore they may be all said to hang on these. When the Scribe heard Christ's decision, he was struck with the justness of it, and answered, that he had rightly determined, since there is but one God supreme, whom we must adore ; and if we love him as much as we are able, and without a rival, and love also our neighbour as ourselves, we worship him more acceptably than if we offered him all the sacrifices in the world. Mark xii. 32. *And the Scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth ; for there is one God, and there is none other but he.* 33. *And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, (answering to all the mind in the law), and with all the soul, and all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices.* Jesus applauded the piety and wisdom of this reflection, by declaring, that the person who made it was not far from the kingdom of God. He had expressed sentiments becoming a subject of God's kingdom, and such as might have an happy influence in disposing him to embrace the gospel, by which he would obtain a share in all the blessings of the children of God. 34. *And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any question (Luke, at all).* See on Matt. xxii. 46. p. 621.

§ CXX. *Jesus proposes a question to the Pharisees concerning Messiah.* Matt. xxii. 41,—46. Mark xii. 35,—37. Luke xx. 41,—44. .

THE Pharisees having, in the course of our Lord's ministry, proposed many difficult questions to him, with a view to try his prophetic gifts, he, in his turn, now that a body of them was gathered together, thought fit to make trial of their skill in the sacred writings. For this purpose he publicly asked their opinion of a difficulty concerning Messiah's pedigree, arising from Ps. cx. Matt. xxii. 41. *While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, 42. Saying, What think ye of Christ ? whose son is he ? They say unto him, The son of David.* Mark xii. 35. *And Jesus answered and said, while he taught in the temple, How say the Scribes that Christ is the Son of David ?* The words in Mark being a reply to the Pharisees answer recorded by Matthew, their meaning is, I know your doctors tell you that Christ is the Son of David ; but how can they support their opinion, and render it consistent with David's words in the cxth Psalm ? Mark xii. 36. *For David himself (Luke, in the book of Psalms) said by the Holy Ghost, (Matt. in spirit) The Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool.* Matt. xxii. 45. *If David then call him, Lord, how is he his son ?* The doctors, it seems, did not look for any thing in their Messiah  
more



more excellent than the most exalted perfections of human nature ; for though they called him the Son of God, they had no notion that he was God, and so could offer no solution of the difficulty. Yet the latter question might have shewed them their error. For if Messiah was to be only a secular prince, as they supposed, ruling the men of his own time, he never could have been called *Lord*, by persons who died before he was born ; far less would so mighty a king as David, who also was his progenitor, have called him *Lord*. Wherefore, since he rules over, not the vulgar dead only of former ages, but even over the kings from whom he was himself descended, and his kingdom comprehends the men of all countries and times, past, present, and to come, the doctors, if they had thought accurately upon the subject, should have expected in their Messiah a king different from all other kings whatever. Besides, he is to sit at God's right hand "till all his enemies are made the footstool of his feet ;" made thoroughly subject unto him. Numbers of Christ's enemies are subjected to him in this life ; and they who will not bow to him willingly, shall, like the rebellious subjects of other kingdoms, be reduced by punishment. Being constituted universal judge, all, whether friends or enemies, shall appear before his tribunal, where, by the highest exercise of kingly power, he shall doom each to his unchangeable state.

The disputations and conversations which Jesus had with the literati, afforded great entertainment to all the common people who happened to be present in the temple. Mark xii. 37. *And the common people heard him gladly* : They heard him with great attention and pleasure. For the clear and solid answers which he returned to the ensnaring questions of his foes, gave them an high opinion of his wisdom, and shewed them how far he was superior to their most renowned Rabbis, whose arguments to prove their opinions, and answers to the objections that were raised against them, were, generally speaking, but mean and trifling in comparison of his. Matt. xxii. 46 *And no man was able to answer him a word* : none of them could offer the least shadow of a solution to the difficulty which he had proposed. *Neither durst any man (from that day forth) ask him any more questions* : The repeated proofs which they had received of the prodigious depth of his understanding, impressed them with such an opinion of his wisdom, that they judged it impossible to entangle him in his talk. For which reason they left off attempting it, and from that day forth troubled him no more with their insidious questions.



§ CXXI. *Jesus denounces woes against the Pharisees a second time ; see § 87. He laments the city a second time ; see § 91. III. Matt. xxiii. 1,—39. Mark xii. 38,—40. Luke xx. 45,—47.*

THUS did Jesus silence his most virulent opposers. But because he had mentioned the final conquest and destruction of his enemies, who were to be made the footstool of his feet, agreeably to David's prediction, he turned towards his disciples, and, in the hearing of all the people, solemnly cautioned them to beware of the Scribes and Pharisees ; by which he insinuated, and that not obscurely, who the enemies were, whose end he had hinted at. Matt. xxiii. 1. *Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, 2. Saying, the Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat* The name *Pharisee* being the appellation of a sect, it cannot be supposed that our Lord meant to say of all the party, that they sat in Moses' chair. Such a character was applicable to none but the doctors of the sect ; for which reason, we must suppose that the phrase *Scribes and Pharisees* is a Hebraism for the *Pharisean Scribes*. 3. *All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do.* The morality of the Pharisees, as appears from many examples mentioned in the gospels, was of a very loose kind, and as for the traditions which they taught, they often made void the law of God altogether. This being the case, it is not to be thought that Jesus would recommend the doctrines and precepts of the Pharisees without exception. Wherefore, we must limit the general expressions here made use of, by what goes before in the discourse ; thus. While these men sit in Moses' seat, while they rightly explain the doctrines and precepts of the law, be sure to obey them ; *but do not ye after their works ; for they say, and do not.* By no means imitate their practices ; for they give many precepts to their disciples, which they do not perform themselves. 4. \* *For they bind* (up)

\* Matt. 4. *For they bind heavy burdens, &c.*] It is well known that the Pharisees gloried in the exactness with which they obeyed the ceremonial part of the law. Nay, they carried matters so high, that, not content with the commandments which God had enjoined, they took upon them to prescribe a variety of traditionary precepts of their own invention. Therefore, if it was this kind of duties that our Lord meant, when he said *they bind heavy burdens, &c.* their zeal must have shewed itself chiefly in public. Or by the grievous burdens which the Pharisees bound up, may be understood the moral and ceremonial precepts of the law, the former of which are called grievous as well as the latter, not because they are so in themselves, but because they were reckoned so by the Pharisees. This interpretation agrees well with the character given of the precepts in question. They were delivered from Moses' seat, i. e. were taken out of the books of Moses ; and the disciples were to observe and do them, which our Lord would by no means have ordained, had he been speaking of



(up) heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay them on mens shoulders, but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. 5. But all their works they do, for to be seen of men. Any good action which they happen to perform, is vitiated by the principle from which it proceeds. They do it with a view to popular applause, and not from a regard to God, far less from a love of goodness. Thus the temper and conduct of the Scribes being by no means a fit pattern for the imitation of his disciples, he openly charged them to beware of following their example. Luke xx. 45. Then in the audience of all the people, he said unto his disciples, (Mark, in his doctrine) Beware of the Scribes, which desire to walk in long robes. Matt. xxiii. 5. They make broad their \* phylacteries, † and enlarge the borders

of the traditionary precepts of the elders. Besides, in this light, the character given of the Scribes and Pharisees is palpably just, namely, that they bound up heavy burdens, &c. For while they themselves neglected both the moral and ceremonial precepts of the divine law, as often as they could do it with secrecy, they wreathed them fast about the necks of the people, and would not give them the smallest respite from its most burdensome ceremonies on any occasion whatsoever. The words, *they bind heavy burdens*, &c. are spoken in allusion to the practice of those who lade and drive beasts of burden. They first make or bind up their loads, then lay them on their backs, and in driving them through bad roads, support the loads and keep them steady, by taking hold of them. Our Lord's meaning therefore was, They will neither bear these loads themselves, nor will they give the people the least respite from them, even in cases where it is due.

\* Ver. 5. *Phylacteries*.] The phylacteries had their origin from the law, Deut. vi. 8. "Thou shalt bind them (speaking of the divine precepts) for a sign upon thine hands, and as frontlets between thine eyes." This precept, which enjoined a constant regard to, and remembrance of God's law, the Jews in latter times interpreted literally. Hence they fastened to their foreheads, and on the left arms, portions of the law written upon parchment scrolls, and called them in their own language פְּסָלִים, *prayers*. But in Greek they were named φυλακτήρια, from their use, which was to put the persons who wore them in mind to keep the divine precepts. Wagenfeil says that the phylacteries for the forehead consisted of four distinct parchments which they rolled up neatly, and put into a case or box of dressed skin, made with four little cells in it, a cell for each scroll; and that the whole was tied to the forehead with a fillet, by which means they could wear a good deal of the Scriptures between their eyes as an ornament, and in little room. The phylactery for the hand or arm consisted of four portions of the law, written on one piece of vellum, but in four columns. This scroll they rolled up, and put in a case, which they tied to their left wrist or arm with a fillet.

† Ibid. *And enlarge the borders of their garments*.] What the borders of their garments (μακρότητα, *fringes*) were, which the Pharisees enlarged, may be gathered from the law, Deut. xxii. 12. "Thou shalt make the fringes on the four quarters of thy vesture, wherewith thou coverest thyself." From this use of the garment, on which the fringes were to be put, it is supposed to have been the veil which the men wore on their heads; and the fringes are thought to have been tufts of twined thread, fastened to the four corners of it with a ribband, in such a manner that each tuft

hanged



ders of their garments, 6. *And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, (πρωτικίων, the chief places at feasts) and the chief seats in the synagogues, πρωτοκαθίδριαι.* The reason why I order you to beware of imitating the Scribes is this: They are excessive proud and arrogant, as is plain from their affected gravity of dress, from the anxiety which they discover to get the principal seats at feasts, and all public meetings, as things belonging to them on account of their superior worth, and from their courting to be saluted in the streets with particular marks of respect, and to be addressed with the pompous and high-sounding titles of *Rabbi*, and *Father*, and *Master*, thinking such public acknowledgments of their merit due from all who meet them. 7. *And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.* The word *Rabbi* properly signifies *great*; and was prefixed to the names of those doctors who had rendered themselves remarkable by the extent of their learning, or who were the authors of new schemes in divinity; heads of sects, whose fame had gained them many followers. This title the Jewish doctors were particularly fond of, because it was a high compliment paid to their understanding, gave them vast authority with their disciples, and made them look big in the eyes of the world. It was the very next thing to infallible. To their excessive pride, the Jewish teachers added an unbounded covetousness and sensuality, which did not suffer the substance even of widows to escape. For they lived well, and free of expence, in the houses of rich widows, on pretence of assisting them in their devotions. Mark xii. 40. *Which devour (καταβιβάζουσιν, which eat up) widows houses, and for a pretence (Luke, a shew) make long prayers. These shall receive greater damnation:* These men, on account of their making piety a cloak to their covetousness and luxury, shall be the more severely punished. See on Matt. xxiii. 14.

The apostles of Christ were to be very different, both in temper and conduct, from the Jewish teachers. They were to decline being called *Rabbi*, because the thing signified by it belonged solely to their Master, in whom the whole treasures of the divine knowledge and wisdom are hid, and who for that reason is the only infallible director of mens consciences; also, because they owed none of their knowledge to themselves, but derived it entirely from him, in which respect they were all brethren, and on a level. Matt. xxiii. 8. *But be not ye called Rabbi; for one*

hanged at a little distance from the corner of the veil to which it was fastened. Hence we see the propriety of the expressions, *μεγαλύνει τα κεραιά, they made the fringes of their garments great, or large.* Hence also we learn, that these fringes were considered as badges of holiness, and that the Pharisees wore a larger kind of them than ordinary, to give themselves airs of uncommon piety, gravity, and wisdom; qualities very essential indeed to the teachers of religion, but which they were entirely void of.



one is your Master, (*καθηγούμενος*, leader, guide; some MSS. read *διδασκαλος*, teacher) even Christ, and all ye are brethren. 9. And call no man your father upon the earth. The Jewish doctors, it seems, were wont to inculcate on their disciples, that existence, except it was improved and ripened by knowledge, was in a manner no existence at all; and boasted, that they who formed mens minds by erudition, gave them a real being, and for that reason were to be considered as their true parents. Hence they arrogantly assumed to themselves the name of *Fathers*, to intimate the peculiar obligations which their disciples, but especially the proselytes from idolatry, were under to them, for their existence, and for the advantages which accompanied it. The title of father in this sense, our Lord absolutely prohibited his apostles either to take or give, because it belongs only to God; *for one is your Father which is in heaven*: life, with all its blessings, comes from God, and men wholly depend upon him; for which cause, all praise and thanksgiving should ultimately be referred to him; so that if any one teaches rightly, not the teacher, but the wisdom of God is to be praised, which exerts and communicates itself by him. Matt. xxiii. 10. *Neither be ye called masters, (καθηγούμενοι) for one is your Master, (καθηγούμενος, leader, commander) even Christ.* With respect to the title of *master* or *leader*, which the Jewish doctors courted, the apostles of Christ were not to accept, far less to solicit it, because, in point of commission and inspiration, they were all upon an equality; neither had they any title to rule the consciences of men, except by virtue of the inspiration which they received from their Master, to whom alone the prerogative of infallibility originally belonged. Nevertheless, our Lord did not mean to say that it is sinful to name men by the stations they hold, or the relations they bear in the world. He only designed to reprove the simplicity of the common people, who offered high praises to their teachers, as if they owed all to them, and nothing to God; and to root out of the minds of his apostles the pharisaical vanity, which decked itself with honours belonging properly to God; but especially to keep them all on a level among themselves, that the whole glory of the Christian scheme might redound to him whose right it was. We may therefore understand these precepts as addressed to the apostles in their peculiar character. Withal, he shewed them what that greatness was which they were capable of, and which only they should aspire after. It was a greatness arising from charity and humility, a greatness diametrically opposite to that of the scribes. 11. *But he that is greatest among you, shall be your servant*: he that desires to be greatest, *μεγιστος*, *magnus*, in allusion to the signification of the word *Rabbi*, the title which the doctors were so ambitious to have. 12. *And whosoever shall exalt himself, by assuming what does not belong to him, shall be abased, that is,*



despised both by God and man; *and he that shall humble himself, in doing the meanest offices of love to his brethren, shall be exalted* unto an high degree of the divine favour.

The above discourse against the Scribes and Pharisees, was pronounced in the hearing of many of the order. They were therefore greatly incensed, and watched for an opportunity to destroy Jesus. But it was not a time for him now to be afraid of them. This being the last sermon he was ever to preach in public, it was necessary to use violent remedies, especially as gentle medicines had hitherto proved ineffectual. Wherefore, with a kind severity, he threatened them in the most awful and solemn manner, denouncing dreadful woes against them, not on account of the personal injuries they had done to him, (see Luke xvii. 4. § 97,) although they were many, but on account of their excessive wickedness. They were public teachers of religion, who abused every mark and character of goodness to all the purposes of villany, than which a more atrocious sin in the sight of God cannot be perpetrated. Under the grimace of a severe sanctified air, they were malicious, implacable, lewd, covetous, and rapacious. In a word, instead of being reformers, they were corrupters of mankind; so that their wickedness being of the very worst sort, it deserved the sharpest rebuke that could be given. The woes were denounced against the Scribes for the following reasons: 1. Because they shut up the kingdom of heaven from men, by taking away "the key of knowledge," as it is called in the parallel passage, Luke xi. 52. § 87. or the right interpretation of the ancient prophecies concerning Messiah, by their example and authority; for they both rejected Jesus themselves, and excommunicated those who did; in short, by doing all they could to hinder the people from repenting of their sins, and believing the gospel. Matt. xxiii. 13. *But woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.* 2. Because they committed the grossest iniquities, being covetous and rapacious, under a cloak of religion; they devoured widows houses, and at the same time made long prayers, in order to hide their villany. This, says Calvin, was as if pretending to kiss the feet of God, one should rise up and audaciously spit in his face; see on Mark xii. 40. § 122. 14. *Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; for ye devour widows houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive greater damnation.* 3. Because they expressed the greatest zeal imaginable in making proselytes, *compassing sea and land*, that is, making long journies and voyages, and leaving no art unpractised for that end; while at the same time their intention in all this, was, not that the Gentiles might become better men through the knowledge of true religion,



gion, but more friendly to them, yielding them the direction of their purses as well as of their consciences. Accordingly, in the heathen countries, these worldlings accommodated religion to the humours of men, placing it not in the eternal and immutable rules of righteousness, but in ceremonial observances; the effect of which was either that their proselytes became more superstitious, more immoral, and more presumptuous than their teachers; or that, taking them for impostors, they relapsed again into their old state of heathenism, and in both cases became *twofold more the children of hell* than even the Pharisees themselves, that is, more openly and unlimitedly wicked than they. 15. *Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell* (see on John xvii. 12. § 133.) *than yourselves.* The zeal of the Jews in making proselytes was so remarkable that it was taken notice of by the heathens, and turned into a proverb, Hor. lib. i. sat. 4. ver. ult.

ac veluti, te

Judæi cogemus in hanc concedere turbam.

—4. For their false doctrine. He mentioned particularly their doctrine concerning oaths, and declared in opposition to their execrable tenets, that every oath is obligatory, the matter of which is lawful; because when men swear by the creature, if their oath has any meaning, it is an appeal to the Creator himself. In any other light, an oath by the creature is absolutely ridiculous, because the creature neither has knowledge with respect to the matter of the oath, nor power to punish the perjury; see on Matt. v. 33. § 26. Matt. xxiii. 16. *Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing, it constitutes no obligation to tell the truth, or to perform one's vow; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor; he is bound by his oath to speak the truth, or to perform his vow.* 17. *Ye fools, and blind; for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold?* The apostle's words, Heb. vi. 16. are a fit comment upon this passage, "For men verily swear by the greater." 18. *And whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing, but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty,* see on ver. 16. 19. *Ye fools, and blind; for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift?* see on ver. 17. 20. *Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon:* consequently the oath is an invocation of his wrath, to whom the altar and the gifts on the altar are sacred, in case of falsehood, or breach of vows. The particular species of wrath invoked in this oath, is God's rejecting the swearer's sacrifices, and denying him the pardon of sin. 21. *And whoso shall swear by the temple,*



*ple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein: consequently the oath is a solemn wishing, that he who dwelleth in the temple may hinder him from ever worshipping there, if he is telling a falsehood, or neglects his vow. Matt. xxiii. 22. And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon: and therefore his oath is a solemn wishing, that God, who dwells in heaven, may exclude him out of that blessed place for ever, if he falsifies his oath. 5. For their superstition. They observed the ceremonial precepts of the law with all possible exactness, while they utterly neglected the eternal, immutable, and indispensable rules of righteousness. 23. Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; for ye pay tithe of mint, and anise, and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment (justice), mercy (charity), and faith (piety); these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. But besides this reproof of their superstition in the performance of positive duties, he condemned it also in the obedience which they gave to the negative precepts of the law; for there likewise this evil root shewed itself. 24. Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, or rather, which strain out a gnat, namely, from your drink, and swallow a camel. The expression is proverbial, and was made use of by our Lord on this occasion, to signify that the Pharisees pretended to be exceedingly afraid of the smallest faults, as if sin had been bitter to them like death, while they indulged themselves secretly in the unrestrained commission of the grossest immoralities. 6. For their hypocrisy. They were at great pains to appear virtuous, and to have a decent external conduct, while they neglected to beautify their inward man with goodness, which in the sight of God is an ornament of great price, and renders men dear and valuable to all who know them. 25. Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, (Mark vii. 8. § 65.) but within they (i. e. the cup and platter) are full of extortion and excess, which ye swallow down without the least scruple. 26. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. Take care that what is within the cup, and not so much exposed to view, be clean; and then thou mayest with propriety bestow pains in cleansing the outside of the cup. But though in this clause our Lord still makes use of the metaphor, he reasons according to the thing intended by it; thus, cleanse first thy mind, thy inward man, from evil dispositions and affections, and of course thy outward behaviour will be virtuous and good. 7. For the success of their hypocrisy. By their care of external appearances, the Pharisees and Scribes made a fair shew, and deceived the simple. Like fine whited sepulchres (see on Luke xi. 44. § 87.) they looked very beautiful without, but within*



within were full of all uncleanness, and defiled every one that touched them. This was a fore rebuke to men who would not keep company with publicans and sinners, for fear they should have been polluted by them. The truth is, these hypocrites were publicly decent, but privately dissolute; they put on a saint-like look, but in reality were the very worst of men. Matt. xxiii. 27. *Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead mens bones, and of all uncleanness.* 28. *Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.* 8. Because by the pains they took in adorning the sepulchres of the prophets, they pretended a great veneration for their memory; and as often as they happened to be mentioned, condemned their fathers who had killed them, declaring that if they had lived in the days of their fathers, they would have opposed their wickedness; while, in the mean time, they still cherished the spirit of their fathers, persecuting the messengers of God, particularly his only Son, on whose destruction they were resolutely bent. 29. *Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees hypocrites; because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous,* 30. *And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.* 31. *Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets;* see on Luke xi. 48. § 87. By affirming, that if ye had lived in the days of your fathers, you would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets, ye acknowledge that ye are children of them who murdered the prophets. But I must be so free as to tell you, that you are their children otherwise than by natural generation; for though you pretend to be more holy than they were, you are like them in all respects, particularly you possess their wicked persecuting spirit, and testify it by all your actions. 32. *Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers sin;* the measure fixed upon by God for punishment. This expression implies, that there is a certain measure fixed for every nation, to which its iniquity is allowed to rise; and that before punishment is inflicted on nations, the measure of their iniquity, determined by God, must be filled up by the succeeding generations adding to the iniquity of the preceding, till the measure is full. According to Glassus, and other critics, *καὶ πληρωσάτε*, is here the imperative for the future, *Ye will fill up*. But it may have been ironically spoken, as our translators understood it. 33. *Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, (see on Luke iii. 7. § 14.) how can ye escape the damnation of hell\*?* 34. *Wherefore* (*διὰ πῦρ*, for this

\* Men of warm tempers are apt to mistake this part of Christ's discourse.



this cause that ye are serpents, and a brood of vipers, who will fill up the measure of your fathers iniquity) *behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes, in order if possible to convert you; and some of them ye shall kill and crucify, and some of them ye shall scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: Matt. xxiii. 35. That upon you may come all the righteous blood* (i. e. the temporal punishment of the murders of righteous men; because in the life to come men shall not be punished for the sins of others, to which they were not accessory) *shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel, unto the blood of Zacharias, the son of Barachias* (see Tillotson's Sermons, vol. ii. pag. 197.) *whom ye slew between the temple and the altar* (see the note, § 122. in which is given a description of the temple). 36. *Verily I say unto you, all these things, the temporal punishment of all these murders, shall come upon this generation.* His meaning was not that he would send them prophets to be killed, that they might not escape the damnation of hell, but that every possible method might be tried for their conversion; though he well knew that they would make light of all, and by so doing, pull down upon themselves such terrible vengeance, as should be a standing monument of the divine displeasure against all the murders committed on the face of the earth, from the beginning of time. For "even as Sodom and Gomorrah," anciently, "and the cities about them, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire;" just so the Jewish nation was singled out, and that generation of the nation pitched upon to be the subjects of God's revenge against murder, and to be an example of punishment to all generations, because they were the most atrocious body of murderers that ever lived.

Having thus laid before the Pharisees, and the nation, their heinous guilt and grievous punishment, the thought of the calamities

course. They fancy that his giving the Pharisees names expressive of their characters, and his denouncing woes against them, justify those censorious judgments, which without reason, or it may be contrary to reason, they pass on persons who happen to be at variance with them. It is very true that Jesus pronounced the Scribes and Pharisees, *hypocrites, fools, blind guides, serpents, a generation of vipers*, and declared that they could not escape the damnation of hell. But it is equally true, that they were hypocrites and fools as wicked as he has painted them, and that he knew them certainly to be such. Wherefore, till we can make it evident that we have the faculty of knowing mens hearts, which Christ possessed, we have no title to imitate him in an action not designed for our imitation, being done by him as a prophet, and by virtue of his prophetic gifts, and not as an ordinary man. Instead of making free with the characters of others, as many do, it is far safer, and in every respect better, both for ourselves and for society, that we keep close to the precept, forbidding rash judgments, evil surmisings, and all backbitings, Matt. vii. 1,—5.



ties that were coming upon them, moved Jesus exceedingly. His bowels were turned within him, and his breast was filled with the gracious meltings of pity to such a degree, that, not chusing to restrain himself, he, in the most mournful accents, bewailed Jerusalem particularly, on account of the peculiar severity of its lot. For as its inhabitants had their hands more deeply imbrued in the blood of the prophets, they were to drink more deeply in the punishment due to such crimes. His lamentation for the city was most moving: Matt. xxiii. 37. *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee,* perhaps in allusion to their having frequently attempted to stone himself, *how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not?* 38. *Behold your house is left unto you desolate.* These tender exclamations, which can hardly be read without tears, convey a strong idea of Christ's love to that ungrateful nation. The words *how often*, mark his unwearied endeavours to cherish and protect them, from the time they were first called to be his people; and the opposition that is stated between his will and theirs, *how often would I? but ye would not*, very emphatically shews their unconquerable obstinacy, in resisting the most winning, and most substantial expressions of the divine love. The clause, *behold your house is left unto you desolate*, is a prediction of the punishment that was to be inflicted upon them for their sin in rejecting Christ. *Their house*, the temple of God, (see 2 Kings v. 8. where the *house of Rimmon* signifies the temple of Rimmon) was from that time to be desolate. The glory of the Lord, which Haggai had foretold should fill the second house, (ch. ii. 7.) was departing. 39. *For I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth* (*απ' αἰτῆς, hereafter*). So the words signify, Mat. xxvi. 64.) *till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.* Because ye have killed the prophets, and stoned me whom the Father hath sent unto you, because your great men are at this moment plotting against me, who am the Lord of the temple, and because ye will assist them in putting me to death, your temple shall be desolate; it shall never be favoured with my presence any more; perhaps also he meant that it was utterly to be destroyed. Nay your nation shall be deserted by me, *for ye shall not see me from henceforth*, &c. In the capacity of a teacher, Jesus had often filled the temple with the glory of his doctrine and miracles; and as a kind friend, had tried with unwearied application to gather the nation under his wings, that he might protect them from the impending judgments of God. Therefore, by their not seeing him from that time forth, we are to understand their not enjoying his presence and care as a teacher, guardian, and friend. This was the last discourse Jesus pronounced in public, with it his ministry ended. From that moment he abandoned



abandoned the Jewish nation, gave them over to walk in their own counsels, and devoted them to destruction. Nor were they ever after to be the objects of his care, till the period of their conversion to Christianity came, which he now foretold: *Ye shall not see me from henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord*; that is, till your nation is converted; for the state of the nation, and not of a few individuals, is here spoken of, as it is also in the parables of the vineyard and marriage-supper. *Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord*, was the cry of the believing multitude, when Jesus made his public entry into Jerusalem a few days before this. Hence, in predicting their future conversion, he very properly alluded to that exclamation by which they had expressed their faith in him as Messiah.

In this manner did Jesus pull the mask of hypocrisy from off the teachers of his own times, condemning it in all its forms. He treated hypocrisy with severity, because it is a most enormous sin, rendering men criminal before God, by things which in their own nature are calculated to please him, such as prayer, almsgiving, fasting, praise. The sharpness with which our Lord spake now, and on other occasions, against hypocrites, plainly and strongly intimates to us, that we should strive more to be good, than to appear so.

This is by far the most spirited of all our Lord's discourses, and being pronounced no doubt with an elevation of voice, and vehemence of gesture, suitable to the sentiments which it expressed, it could not but astonish the people, who had always looked upon their teachers as the holiest of men. Even the persons themselves against whom it was levelled were confounded; their consciences witnessing the truth of what was laid to their charge. They knew not what course to take; and so in the midst of their hesitation, they let Jesus go away quietly, without attempting to lay hands on him, or stone him, as they had sometimes done before, upon much less provocation.

§ CXXII. *Jesus's discourses concerning alms giving, upon seeing a certain poor widow cast two mites into the treasury of the temple,* Mark xii. 41,—44. Luke xxi. 1,—4.

JESUS was now in the treasury, or that part of the womens court, where the chests were placed for receiving the offerings of those who came to worship. These chests, being thirteen in number, had each of them an inscription, signifying for what use the offerings put into them were destined, and were fixed to the pillars of the portico which surrounded the court. Hence the propriety of Mark's expression, xii. 41. *And Jesus sat over against*



*against the treasury* : he sat in the portico of the womens court\*, opposite to the pillars where the chests for receiving the offerings of the people were fixed.

While

\* The womens court.] The Talmudists inform us, that it was in this court the libation of water from Silo'm was made annually at the feast of tabernacles, as a solemn public thanksgiving and prayer for the former and latter rains ; to which rite it is generally supposed our Lord alluded, John vii. 38. § 76. The court of the women had three gates ; one on the south, and one on the north, but the principal was that on the east, called *Beautiful* (*Ωραία*), Acts iii. 2. because notwithstanding it was made of Corinthian brass, a metal in those days more precious than gold, the materials were surpassed by the workmanship of this noble structure.

The court of the men, called also the *court of Israel*, was seven cubits and a half higher than that of the women ; for the ascent to it from thence was by a stair of fifteen steps, each step half a cubit high. The court of the men, properly speaking, was part of the area of the priest's court, being as it were cut off from it on the east, and depressed two cubits and a half ; for the stair by which they descended into it from the priest's court consisted of four steps, each half a cubit high, except the lower, which was a cubit. It had only one gate, called Nicanor, which was placed in its eastern wall, from whence to the extremity of the priest's court, that of Israel measured eleven cubits. And this was its breadth from east to west, but lengthways, or from north to south, it was a hundred and thirty-five cubits, comprehending the whole breadth of the mountain. Here the stationary-men, as they were called, stood, twenty-four in number, whose office it was to assist every day at public worship, in the name of the whole Jewish people, and to put up the prayers of the nation. In one of the chambers of this court, the supreme council, called Sanhedrim, held its meetings.

The court of the priests was variously divided in respect of sanctity. From the temple porch toward the altar, as far as the space of twenty-two cubits, was deemed more holy than the rest of the area ; for which reason, no person was permitted to come there but priests capable of the service. This is the place called in Scripture, *between the porch and the altar*, where Zaccharias, the son of Barachias, was slain, and which Joel refers to, chap. ii. 17. The space allotted for the altar was thirty-two cubits in breadth ; here the victims were killed, and the sacrifices prepared. From the space of the altar, to the nearest extremity of the men's court, measured eleven cubits. This part of the court was defined for the offerers to come and put their hands on the heads of their victims. The temple itself, with its porch, was a hundred cubits long, and from the back of the temple to the western wall of the court, was twelve cubits ; the length therefore of the two courts together, from east to west, was a hundred and eighty-seven cubits, and their breadth a hundred and thirty-five.

The court of the Gentiles was the lowest part of the mountain, for which reason it was called the *mountain of the house*. Unclean Israelites might come into it, but there was a partition of ten hands breadth high, drawn round it, at the distance of ten cubits from the wall which formed the womens court. Within this enclosure, which was called *Cbel*, and reckoned more holy than the rest of the court, neither Gentiles nor unclean Israelites were allowed to come. Josephus, Antiq. xv. 14. tells us, that, at proper distances, there were inscriptions on the partition wall, in divers languages, forbidding any Gentile to enter on pain of death. And to this the apostle Paul alludes, when he tells the Gentiles, Eph. ii. 14.



While Jesus was in the treasury, he (*and*) beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. Mark xii. 42. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites (*λίττα δύο*) which make a farthing; *οἷς ἡ ἀδράντης*. This coin in value was no more than three fourths of

“He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us.”

The court of the Gentiles was encompassed with a magnificent portico, consisting of a double row of pillars, and forming an agreeable walk, sheltered both from the weather and the sun. That to the east was called *Solomon's portico*, (see on Mark xiii. 1, 2. § 123.) but to the south, the building was more noble, consisting of three rows of pillars of exquisite workmanship, and was called the *royal portico*, *τοα βασιλικη*, Joseph. Antiq. xv. 14. The court itself was of an unequal breadth, being widest on the south opposite to the royal portico. On the east, opposite to Solomon's portico, it was wider than on the north; but to the west it was narrowest of all.

In the walls of these porticos, there were five gates; two on the south, called *Hulda*, from the prophets of that name. Lightfoot thinks this wall fronted the quarter of the city called *Acra*, which he places to the south of *Sion*; but others are of opinion that *Sion* was to the south of *Acra*. On the west, there was the gate *Kipponim*, with a bridge and causeway leading to *Sion*. In ancient times this wall had two gates, to the most southerly of which the bridge was joined; 1 Chron. xxvi. 16,—18. It was raised by Solomon at a prodigious expence, for it is mentioned as one of the instances of his magnificence which astonished the queen of Sheba, 1 Kings x. 5. On the north, there was one gate called *Tedi*, or *Teri*. The castle *Antonia*, built by Herod, was situated at the angle formed by the western and northern porticos of the court. Joseph. Bell. v. 5. § 8. It stood fronting the west, on a rock fifty cubits high, steep on all sides. In this fortress Herod first, and after him the Romans, kept a garrison constantly, to repress any tumult that might happen in the temple. And for that purpose, on the side nearest to the temple, there were stairs reaching to both porticos, by which the soldiers could descend as occasion required. See Acts xxi. 32. 34. 35. 40. On the east, there was the gate *Shushan*, so called because when the temple was rebuilt by the order of Cyrus king of Persia, his palace of *Shushan* was carved upon it, as a public acknowledgment of the obligations which the nation was under to that prince. The gates therefore of the several courts of the temple were nine in all, each thirty cubits high, and fifteen broad, curiously wrought, and adorned with every thing that could give them beauty or magnificence. Moreover, the situation of Mount *Moriah*, on which the temple was built, added very much to its grandeur; for the city lay round it in the form of an amphitheatre; on the one hand was *Sion*, on the other *Acra*, and backwards was *Bezetha* or the *New Town*. See Joseph. Bell. v. 14. Such was Herod's temple according to the accounts given of it by Josephus and the Talmudists.

But the temple which Solomon built, seems to have been of a different form; for it had but two courts, both on the summit of the mountain, 1 Kings xxi. 5. The court of the priests was called the *Higher Court*, Jer. xxxvi. 10. either because its plane was somewhat higher than that of the congregation, or because it was nearer to the oracle. The court of the congregation was called the *great court*, 2 Chron. iv. 9. on account of its spaciousness. It is uncertain whether it surrounded the court of the priests on three sides, or was cut off from it on one side as in Herod's temple.



of our farthing. Wherefore the offering given by this poor widow was very small in itself, though in another respect it was a great gift, being all that she had, even all her living. We can hardly suppose, that at each of the chests there were officers placed to receive and count the money which the people offered, and to name the sum aloud before they put it in. It is more reasonable to fancy, that each person put his own offering privately into the chest, by a slit in its top. Wherefore by mentioning the particular sum which this poor widow put in, as well as by declaring that it was all her living, our Lord shewed that nothing was hid from his knowledge. 43. *And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast more in than all they which have cast into the treasury.* To encourage charity, and to shew that it is the disposition of the mind, not the magnificence of the offering, which God regards, the Son of God applauded this poor widow, as having given more in proportion than them all. 44. *For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.* Their offerings, though great in respect of hers, bare but a small proportion to their estates; whereas her offering was the whole of her income for that day, or perhaps the whole of the money in her possession at that time.

Both the poor and the rich may learn something from this passage of the gospel. The poor, who seem to have the means of doing charitable offices denied them in a great measure, are encouraged by it to do what they can; because, although it may be little, God who looks into the heart, values it not according to what it is in itself, but according to the disposition with which it is given. On the other hand, it shews the rich that it is not enough that they exceed the poor in the quantity of their charity. A little given where a little is left behind, often appeareth in the eye of God a much nobler offering, and discovers a far greater strength of good dispositions, than sums vastly larger bestowed out of a plentiful abundance.

ple. The text only says that the two were divided by a wall consisting of three courses of hewed stones, with a row of cedar beams at the top, 1 Kings vi. 36. probably so low that the people could look over it, and see what was doing within. There is indeed a new court spoken of, 1 Chron. xx. 5. which some think was formed by a wall drawn through the court of the priests, at a little distance from the temple, so as to exclude the altar. But the text seems to favour their opinion, who think it was only the court of the priests repaired.



§ CXXIII. *Jesus foretels the destruction of Jerusalem the second time.* See § 101. Matt. xxiv. 1,—43. Mark xiii. 1,—36. Luke xxi. 5,—36.

OUR Lord, in the conclusion of his lamentation over Jerusalem, had declared, that the temple should never be favoured with his presence any more. “Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.” A resolution of this kind appeared very strange to the disciples, and affected them much. For which reason they stopped him as he was going away, and desired him to see what a fine sumptuous building the temple was: insinuating, that they were surprised to hear him talk of leaving it desolate; that so rich and glorious a fabric was not to be deserted rashly; and that they should all be very happy when he, as Messiah, took possession of it, with the other palaces which of right belonged to him. Matt. xxiv. 1. *And Jesus went out and departed from the temple. And his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple.* Mark xiii. 1. *And as he went out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Master. see what manner of stones, and what buildings are here.* They were going to the mount of Olives, which stood eastward from the city. It was the eastern wall, therefore, of the temple fronting that mountain which the disciples desired their Master to look at, and which, being built from the bottom of the valley to a prodigious height, with stones of incredible bulk, firmly compacted together, made a very grand appearance at a distance. See Joseph. Ant. xv. 14. Bell. vi. 6. The magnificence of the fabric, however, was not the only topic they descanted upon: they spake also of the precious utensils wherewith it was furnished, and of the gifts with which the treasury was enriched. So Luke informs us, xxi. 5. *And as some spake of the temple how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he said,* Mark xiii. 2. *And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? (Matt. Verily I say unto you. Luke, The days will come in the which) \* there shall not be left one stone upon*

\* Mark 2. *There shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down.*] Josephus, Bell. vii. 9. tells us, that Titus having held a council of his generals, who were for burning the temple, declared, that he would by all means save that edifice, as an ornament to the empire. But one greater than Titus had determined and declared that it should be destroyed. Accordingly the soldiers burnt it without paying any regard to his orders. So Josephus informs us, Bell. vii. 10. where, giving a particular account of the destruction of the temple, which was the first part of the city that was taken by the Romans, he says, that “one of the soldiers, moved by a divine impetus, caught some burning materials, and mounting the shoulder of his companion, thrust the fire in at one of the windows.” The fire spreading itself, was observed by Titus, who cried



upon another, that shall not be thrown down. This superb building, which you behold adorned with huge stones of great beauty, and with costly gifts, shall be razed to the very foundation. In Mr Mede's opinion, the eastern wall was the only part of Solomon's structure that remained after the Chaldeans burnt the temple. Hence the portico built on the top of it, obtained the name of *Solomon's porch* or portico, John x. 23.

When the disciples heard their Master affirm, that not so much as one of those huge stones which had mocked the fury of Nebuchadnezzar's army, and survived the envy of time, was to be left upon another, but that they were all to be thrown down, they perceived that the temple was to be demblished. But at this time none of our Lord's followers had the least apprehension that he was to take away the sacrifices, and make such a change in religion as would render the temple of no use. And therefore, hearing him speak of its demolition, they no doubt supposed, that the fabric then standing was too small for the numerous worshippers who should come, when all nations were subjected to Messiah; and thought it was for that reason to be pulled down, in order to be erected on a more magnificent plan, suitable to the idea they had conceived of the greatness of his future kingdom. Entertaining these imaginations, they received the news with pleasure, and fancied to themselves very glorious things as they travelled along. Accordingly, when Jesus was come to the mount of Olives, and had taken a seat on some eminence, from whence the temple, and part of the city could be seen, they drew near, and expressed their joy, by desiring to know when the demolition of the old structure was to happen, and what were to be the signs of his coming, and of the end of the world. Matt. xxiv. 3. *And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, (Mark, over against the temple) the disciples (Mark, Peter and James, and John and Andrew) came unto him privately, (i.e. while the rest were at a distance on the road, or absent on some occasion or other) saying, (Luke, Master, but when shall these things be?) Tell us when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, (τὴς αὐτῆς παρασκευῆς) \* and of the end of the world?*

By

to the soldiers to extinguish it; but they neither regarded his voice, nor the beckoning of his hand. God had determined to destroy this temple, and therefore the counsels and designs, even of Titus himself, the instrument of this destruction, availed nothing to preserve it. The Jewish Talmud Taanith, ch. 4. and Maimonides Taanith, ch. 5. add, "that Turnus (i.e. Terentius) Rufus, one of Titus' captains, did, with a plow share, tear up the foundations of the temple." So exactly was this passage of our Lord's prophecy fulfilled.

\* Matt. 3. *And of the end of the world.?*] Because the disciples joined their Master's coming and the end of the world, with the demolition of the temple, this prophecy has commonly been thought to foretel the destruction of the world also. And in support of this opinion it is alleged, that



By their Master's coming, the signs of which the disciples asked, it is probable they meant *his coming* to erect that great secular empire, over which they supposed Messiah was to reign, and of which they imagined he had spoken formerly, when he told them,  
Matt.

that the disciples connected the two events together, because they fancied that the temple could not fall, unless in the ruins of the world. But they must certainly have known, that Solomon's building had been destroyed by the Babylonians, though erected by the appointment of God, and dignified with the Schechinah, or visible symbol of the divine presence. If so, they could hardly think that a temple so much inferior, both in the greatness of its privileges, and the beauty of its fabric, was not to perish, unless in the desolation of the world. In the second place, according to this interpretation of the prophecy, Jesus hath declared, with the greatest solemnity, a thing which no person could be ignorant of. For who did not know, that with the world Herod's temple, and all other buildings, should crumble into pieces? In the third place, which I think is absolutely decisive, our Lord himself has forbidden us to understand any part of this prophecy primarily of the destruction of the world; having connected all its parts in such a manner, that the things foretold, whatever they are, must have happened in close succession. Matt. xxiv. 29. "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened," &c. Mark xiii. 24. "But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened," &c. Besides, at the conclusion of the whole, he declared, that the generation of men then in being should not die till all was fulfilled. Matt. xxiv. 34. "Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." For any interpreter to correct Christ's language here, and say, that in the former passage, *immediately after* signifies two or three thousand years after; and that in the latter, *all these things* signifies only some of them, is a liberty which cannot safely be taken with his words. It is true, Mede, Brennius, Markius, Wolfius, Dr Sykes, &c. give another turn to the latter passage, interpreting it of the Jewish nation continuing a distinct people till the end of the world. But their sense of the word *generation* is altogether uncommon, as will appear by the following examples: Exod. i. 6. "And Joseph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation." Judges ii. 10. "And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers; and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord." Eccles. i. 4. "One generation passeth away, and another cometh; but the earth abideth for ever." See Whitby in Locum. Besides, their interpretation of the passage does not agree with the words immediately preceding, Matt. 33. "So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things," consequently the darkening of the sun and the moon, &c. "know that it is near, even at the door. 34 Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled." Nor does it seem to be matter of fact. For the Jews are preserved a distinct people chiefly by the external mark of circumcision, and by their obstinate adherence to the institutions of Moses. When they lay aside these, as we know they will do, before the end of the world, namely, at their conversion, they shall no longer continue a distinct people, but shall be lost among the rest of mankind, professing the same religion with themselves. They who think the prophecy foretells the end of the world, and the day of judgment, support their opinion likewise by Matt. xxiv. 31. "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." But an attentive reader will easily see, that these words do not primarily belong to the last judgment; because not the elect  
only,



Matt. xvi. 26. "There be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." For in this sense they took the phrase on all other occasions, till they received the gifts of the Spirit, and understood the true nature of Messiah's kingdom. They connected the demolition of the temple and the end of the world, or as it should rather be translated, *the end of the age* \*, (see Whitby in loc.) with their Master's coming, although they had not at that time the least notion of his being to destroy the nation, nor the least † suspicion of any change to be made in religion. By the end of the age, therefore, to happen at his coming, they could mean nothing else but the end of the political economy, or form of government by heathen procurators, which then subsisted; and they would look on their Master's coming to destroy the age, or political constitution of the nation then subsisting, as a very agreeable event. And for the demolition of the temple to happen at the same time, they might think it proper, if they expected a larger and more superb building in its stead, proportionable to the number of Messiah's subjects, who should come up to worship. In any other view the end of the world, or age, and the destruction of the temple, would have been a most melancholy prospect, and such as the disciples, in their present temper, could not have looked on but with the greatest uneasiness. Therefore, to shew them their mistake, Jesus delivered this wonderful prophecy, the general

only, but all men whatsoever, are to be summoned to the bar of Christ. They rather refer to the conversion of the world. See the paraphrase of the passage. Indeed, as the things which beset the Jewish nation, viz. their bondage in Egypt, their deliverance from that bondage, their passage through the Red Sea, their abode in the wilderness forty years, till that servile abject spirit which they had contracted in the house of bondage was worn off, the sacrifices and oblations prescribed them, their entering into Canaan through Jordan, &c. were all typical, representing the methods by which God delivers mankind from the bondage of sin, and conducts them into heaven, I will not deny that the destruction of the nation may prefigure the dissolution of the world. At the same time, I think the reasons offered above, forbid us to interpret the prophecy primarily of that destruction.

\* *Συντελεια του αιωνος* may easily admit of this signification here, seeing that in other passages it denotes the end of the Mosaic economy. Thus, Heb. ix. 26. "But now once in the end of the world (*επι συντελεια των αιωνων*) hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." 1 Cor. x. 11. "And they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" (*τελη του αιωνου*).

† That the disciples at this time were far from thinking the temple was to be destroyed, or that any change was to be made in religion, is evident from Acts vi. 13. where we are told the Jews considered the bare mentioning of such things as blasphemy. "And they set up false witnesses, which said, This man (Stephen) ceases not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place and the law; for we have heard him say, that Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered."



general scope of which was to make them sensible, that *his coming in his kingdom* would be followed, not with the exaltation of the Jews to universal empire, but with their destruction, and to point out to them the signs by which they might foresee the approach of that destruction.

The disciples having asked the time of their Master's coming in his kingdom, and the signs of the destruction of the temple, he answered by pointing out both the more remote and the more immediate signs of these events. He began with the more remote signs, telling them, that before his coming false Christs should arise and deceive many, and that the time of their appearing was at hand. Luke xxi. 8. *And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived, for \* many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; (Matt. Mark, and shall deceive many) and the time draweth near.* These false Christs began to appear soon after our Lord's death, but they multiplied as the national calamities increased. (See Matt. xxiv. 11. 24.)—*go ye not therefore after them.* This caution was far from being unnecessary, because though the disciples were to see their Master ascend into heaven, they might take occasion from the prophecy he was now delivering, to expect that he would appear again on earth, and so were in danger of being seduced by the false Christs that should arise. The next sign mentioned in the prophecy is the wars and commotions which should arise in the countries round Judea. 9. *But † when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, (Matt. Mark, wars, and rumours of wars) be not terrified at the prospect of these calamities: for (Mark, all) these things must first come to pass: they must come to pass a considerable time before the destruction of the nation. Accordingly it is added; But the end is not by and by.* The end of the age or Jewish dispensation, and the demolition of the temple, will not be immediately on the back of these things.

Having mentioned the more remote signs of this catastrophe,  
our

\* Luke 8. *Many shall come in my name, saying. I am Christ.*] Such was Simon Magus, mentioned in the Acts, as bewitching the people of Samaria with his sorceries, not many days after our Lord's ascension; "to whom the Samaritans gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, that he was the great power of God," Acts viii. 10, 11. This man, after his conversion to Christianity, deluded numbers with another sort of deceit; for Irenæus tells us, adv. Hier. c. 20. "That he declared he was the person who among the Jews appeared as the Son of God, and was conceived to have suffered in Judea, but had not really done so:" that is, in the words of the prophecy, he came in Christ's name, pretending to be Christ. Such also was Dositheus, Simon's contemporary, who, as Origin tells us, contr. Cels. lib. 1. pretended to be *the Christ* foretold by Moses, and *the Son of God.* See on Matt. xxiv. 24.

† Luke 9. *When ye shall hear of wars and commotions.*] Among other wars, the news of which might terrify the Jews, that with which they were threatened by the emperor Caius, for not admitting his statue into the temple, is here foretold. It blew over, however, by Caius's death; so that, as our Lord predicted, the end was not by and by.



our Lord goes on to foretel some which were more immediately to precede it. Luke xxi. 10. *Then said he unto them, \* Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. 11. † And great*

\* Luke 10. *Nation shall rise against nation, &c.*] See Grotius in loc. who gives a particular account of the wars of the Jews among themselves, and of the Romans with the Syrians, Samaritans, and other neighbouring nations, before Jerusalem was destroyed. Josephus throughout, has shewed us the fulfilment of this part of the prophecy.

† Luke 11. *And great earthquakes, &c.*] In the time of Claudius and Nero, there were great earthquakes at Crete, Smyrna, Miletus, Chios, Samos, Laodicea, Hierapolis, and Colosse, in all which places the Jews lived. See Grotius. Thus were there earthquakes in divers places. Moreover, there were judgments of this kind in Judea likewise; for Josephus tells us, Bell. iv. 7. "There happened there an immense tempest, and vehement winds with rain, and frequent lightnings, and dreadful thunders, and extreme roarings of the quaking earth, which demonstrated to all that the world was disturbed at the destruction of men."

The *famine* in the reign of Claudius, which afflicted Judea in particular, is well known. It is mentioned, Acts xi. 28. It is taken notice of likewise by Suetonius Claud. c. 18. and by Dio. Josephus tells us many perished in it, Ant. xx. 2. See the following paragraph.

That Judea was afflicted with *pestilence* likewise, we learn from Josephus, who tells us, Bell. v. 1. that one Niger being put to death by the seditious, imprecated pestilence upon them, which came to pass. Farther, concerning the pestilence and famine, Josephus writes thus, Bell. vii. 17. "Being assembled together from all parts to the feast of unleavened bread, presently and on a sudden they were environed with war. And first of all a plague fell among them, by reason of the straitness of the place, and immediately after a famine worse than it." Besides, in the progress of the siege, the number of the dead, and the stench arising from their unburied carcases, must have infected the air, and occasioned pestilence. For Josephus tells us, Bell. vi. *fine*, that there were no less than six hundred thousand dead bodies carried out of the city, and suffered to lie unburied.

Of the *fearful sights and great signs from heaven*, Josephus has given us a particular account, Bell. vii. 12. "There was a comet in the form of a fiery sword, which for a year together did hang over the city. Before the first revolt and war, the people being gathered together to the feast of unleavened bread, on the 8th of April, at the ninth hour of the night, there was as much light about the altar and temple, as if it had been bright day. This remained half an hour. At the same festival, the inner gate of the temple, on the east side, being of massy brails, which required at least twenty men to shut it, was seen at midnight to open of its own accord. Not long after the feast days, on the 21st of May, there was seen a vision beyond all belief: and perhaps what I am going to relate might seem a fable, if some were not now alive who beheld it, and if the subsequent calamity had not been worthy of such a presage. For before the sun-set, were seen in the air chariots and armies in battle array, passing along in the clouds, and investing the city. And upon the feast of Pentecost at night, the priests going into the inner temple to attend their wonted service, said they first felt the place to move and tremble, after that they heard a voice which said, *Let us depart hence*. But that which was most wonderful of all, one Jesus, the son of Ananus, of the common people, four years before the war began, when the city flourished in peace and riches, coming to the celebration of the feast of tabernacles at Jerusalem, suddenly began to cry out thus: A voice from the east, a voice from the west, a voice from the four winds, a voice against Jerusalem and the tem-



*great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences, and fearful sights, and great signs shall there be from heaven.* The earthquakes, and pestilences, and famines mentioned by Jesus, as signs of the approach of the destruction of Jerusalem, were not natural and ordinary instances of these evils, but they were to be the greatest of their kind. For which reason, when they came to pass, the apostles, observing their conformity to their Master's prediction, might easily collect that the destruction of the city was fast approaching, and might take measures for their own safety. Matt. xxiv. 8. *All these are the beginnings of sorrows; αἰνὰ ὀδυνῶν.* *Odyn* properly signifies the pain of child-bearing, which at the beginning is but light, in comparison of what it becomes afterwards. Therefore, our Lord's meaning was, that the evils which he mentioned were but small, in comparison of those which were yet to fall upon the nation. Matt. xxiv. 9. *Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you.* Luke expresses this part of the prophecy more exactly, xxi. 12. \* *But before all these things:* Before the appearing of the

ple, a voice against men and women newly married, a voice against all this people. And thus crying day and night, he went about all the streets of the city." Josephus adds, that "he was scourged by some of the nobility, but without speaking a word for himself, he persevered crying as before; that he was carried before Albinus the Roman general, who caused him to be beaten till his bones appeared, but that he neither intreated nor wept; but, as well as he could, framing a weeping voice, he cried at every stroke, Wo, wo to Jerusalem:" that he went thus crying chiefly upon holy days, for the space of seven years and five months, till in the time of the siege, beholding what he had foretold, he ceased. And that then once again going about the city, on the wall, "he cried with a loud voice, Wo, wo to the city, temple, and people; and lastly he said, Wo also to myself. Which words were no sooner uttered, than a stone thrown out of an engine smote him, and so he yielded up the ghost, lamenting them all."

\* Luke 12. *But before all these things they shall lay their hands on you and persecute you, &c.*] How truly the particulars foretold in this verse were accomplished, we learn even from the Roman historians, Tacitus and Suetonius, who have given an account of the persecution raised against the Christians by Nero. But the history of the Acts will throw the greatest light on this passage. For there we are told, that immediately after our Lord's ascension, Peter and John were called before the Jewish senate, iv. 6. 7. and beaten, v. 40.: That Stephen was brought before the same court, vi. 12. and put to death, vii. 58.: That Saul made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women, committed them to prison, viii. 3. and punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, persecuted them unto strange cities, xxvi. 11.: That James was brought before Herod, and by him put to death, xii. 2.: That the same prince laid Peter in prison, intending to kill him likewise, xii. 4.: That Paul, formerly himself a persecutor, but now converted, was in his turn frequently persecuted; that he and Silas were imprisoned and beaten in the synagogue of Philippi, xvi. 23.: That he was brought before the great synagogue or senate of the Jews in Jerusalem, xxii. 30.; before king Agrippa and his wife,



the false Christs, before the rumours of wars, the earthquakes, famines, and pestilences that were to be in divers places, *they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, (Mark, councils, and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten) and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake* Mark xiii. 9. *But take heed to yourselves: Walk circumspectly, and arm yourselves both with patience and fortitude, that you may be able to perform your duty through the whole course of those persecutions.* Luke xxi. 13. *And it shall turn to you for a testimony (Mark, against them).* The persecutions which you suffer shall become a glorious proof both of your innocence and of their guilt in rejecting the gospel. (See on Matt. x. 18. § 40.) Mark xiii. 10. *And the gospel must first be published among all nations.* (See on Matt. xxiv. 14. p. 645.) 11. *But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye; for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost* (See on Matt. x. 19, 20. § 40.) Luke xxi. 14. *Settle it therefore in your hearts: Seeing the Holy Ghost will assist you in your defences, let it be a fixed point with you, not to meditate before what ye shall answer.* 15. *For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay, nor resist: I will suggest to you such sentiments, and enable you to deliver them with such eloquence, that your defences shall be unanswerable; and your adversaries shall be struck with them, especially when they find by your manner, that you have spoken without premeditation. Of the fulfilment of this promise we have evident examples in the defences made by the protomartyr Stephen, and by the apostle Paul, especially before king Agrippa and the Roman governors. But there is no need to insist upon particulars. The prevalency of the gospel, wherever it was preached, demonstrates, beyond all doubt, that the defences made by the preachers thereof were unanswerable.*

Luke xxi. 16. *And ye shall be betrayed both by parents and brethren, and kin-folk, and friends, (Mark, Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son) and some of you shall they cause to be put to death (Mark, And children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death.)* 17. *And ye shall be hated of all men (Matt. nations) for my name's sake: Crimes and cruelties shall be committed by the unbelieving Jews and the apostate Christians, the very idea of which raises horror in the most barbarous nations. For that the prophecy speaks of unbelievers and apostates, is evident from*

what

wife, before the Roman governors Gallio, Felix, and Festus, and last of all before the emperor Nero in Rome, and his præfect Helius Cælianus.



what follows in Matt. xxiv. 10. *And there shall many be offended, i. e. made to stumble and apostatize, and shall betray one another; namely, after they have apostatized.* As this article of the prophecy has an especial relation to Christ's disciples, we cannot expect any account of its accomplishment in Josephus. Moreover, considering how short the history is, which the only Christian writer now remaining has given us of the church, in the period preceding the destruction of Jerusalem, it is not to be wondered at if he has mentioned none of the instances of the treachery here foretold. Tacitus has assured us, that in Nero's persecution the Christians betrayed one another. And with respect to the Jews, their known zeal and cruelty render it abundantly credible, that in the persecution of the Christians, the bigots to the law of Moses, overlooking the ties of nature, would be instrumental in putting even their own relations to death, who followed the standard of Christ. To conclude, that Christ's disciples were hated of all men in the first ages, is well known. Their opposition to idolatry was the cause of the ill-will which the heathens bore towards them. Their preaching that the law of Moses was abrogated, enraged the Jews. And in this temper did both Jews and heathens continue during the first three centuries, till Constantine declaring himself of the Christian persuasion, put an end to the cruelties that had been so long exercised upon the disciples of Jesus. Matt. xxiv. 11. *And many false prophets shall arise, and deceive many.* The false prophets here mentioned are different from those mentioned in the preceding part of the prophecy, (Matt. 5. Luke 8. p. 640.) as coming in the name of Christ; for they did not pretend to be Messiah, as the others did, but only to be commissioned by God to prophesy deliverance to the people. Matt. xxiv. 12. *And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.* The perfidy and wickedness of the Jews and apostates, and the horrible cruelties which they shall

\* Matt. 11. *Many false prophets shall arise.*] See on Matt. xxiv. 14. concerning the false prophets who arose among the Jews; and Grotius on this verse concerning the false prophets who arose among the Christians, and with their doctrine deceived many.

† Matt. 12. *Iniquity shall abound.*] Every part of Josephus's history of the war, is full of the horrible wickedness committed by the Jews; but in his relation of the siege, he mentions such acts of barbarity and cruelty as are shocking to human nature, insomuch that he is obliged to own they were the wickedest nation under heaven. I shall only produce one passage, in which, speaking of the manners of the Jews before this war broke out, he describes them thus: Bell. vii. 28. "For that time among the Jews abounded with all manner of iniquity, so that none was left undone. Yea, though one endeavoured to invent some new villany, yet could he invent none that was not then practised." But the particular iniquity which our Lord seems now to have had in view, was the barbarity wherewith they persecuted his disciples, and which caused the love of many of them to wax cold; that is, caused them to apostatize. See on Luke xxi. 16. p. 643.



shall exercise towards my disciples, will discourage many who have already taken on them the Christian name, or who are about to do so. Whilst Jesus foretold the apostasy of many, he at the same time declared, that such of his disciples as continued steadfast in the profession of his religion, should not be involved in the ruin which was coming upon the nation, and in particular should not perish in the siege. Matt. xxiv. 13. *But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved*: He who is neither made to apostatize by the persecutions I have described, nor led astray by the seduction of false Christians, shall escape out of the destruction that is about to fall on this land. Luke expresses it thus, xxi. 18. *But there shall not an hair of your head perish*: a proverbial expression denoting absolute safety. Thus Jesus encouraged all to steadfastness in the midst of the fiery trial that was to try them. How his promise was accomplished, we shall see when we come to explain Luke xxi. 20. Matt. xxiv. 14. *And this gospel of the kingdom \* shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations*: (See Mark xiii. 10.) The persecutions raised against the Christians in Judea, and the tribulations befalling the land, shall scatter my disciples, by which means the gospel shall be preached in all the world,—† *and then shall the*

\* Matt. 14. *Shall be preached in all the world.*] The fulfilment of this part of the prophecy we learn chiefly from the writings of the New Testament, which inform us, that the gospel was preached by Paul in Arabia, and through the vast tract from Jerusalem to Iconium in Lycaonia, and in Galatia, and through all Asia Minor, and in Greece, and round about to Illyricum, and in Crete, and Italy, probably also in Spain and Gaul. Besides, the gospel reached much farther than this apostle carried it; for we find him writing to Christians who had never seen his face. Also we have still remaining Peter's epistles to the converted Jews in Pontus, Asia, Cappadocia, and Bithynia. Probably the gospel was preached in these and many other countries, by the Jews who sojourned there, and who having come up to Jerusalem to the passover, were converted on the day of Pentecost. The Ethiopian eunuch, converted by Philip, would carry it likewise into his country. But whatever way it happened, the fact is certain, that in most of these countries, churches were planted within thirty years after Christ's death, or about ten years before the destruction of Jerusalem. Hence we find the apostle telling the Romans, x. 18. that the sound of the preachers of the gospel "had gone forth into all the world, and their word to the end of the earth." Hence likewise, he tells the church in Rome, chap. i. that "their faith was spoken of throughout the whole world;" and the church at Colosse, i. 6. 23. that "the truth of the gospel was come not to them only, but to all the world, being preached to every creature." Hence also when Mark wrote his gospel, the apostles had gone forth, "and preached every where," xvi. 20. The preaching of the gospel through the whole world by twelve illiterate fishermen, and the destruction of Jerusalem, were events extremely improbable, and therefore the prediction and accomplishment of them, deserve to be particularly taken notice of; and the rather that they were both absolutely necessary for bringing about the conversion of the world to Christianity, and are mentioned in this prophecy as such.

† Ibidem. *And then shall the end come.*] The fulfilment of this part of the



*the end come*: The end of the age, concerning which you are enquiring, shall happen after the gospel or good news of the kingdom of heaven, the new dispensation of religion, is sufficiently published in all the world. Two things, therefore, are here foretold; first, that before the destruction of Jerusalem, the gospel should be preached in all the world, that is, through all the Roman empire, commonly called *Imperium orbis terrarum*. The second thing foretold is, that when the gospel was thus universally preached, Jerusalem should be destroyed, and the Mosaical economy brought to an end. That the gospel should be preached to all nations before the dissolution of the Jewish state, was necessary, in order that it might be offered to all nations with sufficient evidence; or, as our Lord expresses it, that it might be *for a witness to all nations*. The reason is, the historical facts, on which the truth of the Christian religion depends, received great confirmation from the opposition which the Jews made as a nation to this religion, and from their persecuting its disciples; for it could not but appear, in the eyes of all the Gentiles, a strong proof of the truth of the gospel-history, that the most important particulars contained in it were never called in question by the people, among whom they were said to have happened, notwithstanding they rejected the gospel, and persecuted its preachers. Their opposition to Christianity as a body politic, being thus necessary for the confirmation of the gospel, it was necessary that their constitution should subsist, until the gospel was preached to all nations.

Our Lord having foretold both the more remote and the more immediate signs of the end of the Jewish economy, proceeds to describe the siege and destruction of Jerusalem. Matt. xxiv. 15. *When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place.* The abomination which caused the desolation whereof Daniel has prophesied, ch. ix. 27. signifies the Roman armies with their standards, wherein the images of their idols were painted; which armies were an abomination to the Jews on account of their idolatry, and caused desolation wherever they came. When ye shall see these armies encamped *in the holy place*, i. e. in the territory of Jerusalem, called by the Jews the holy city, Matt. xxvii. 53. *who so readeth, let him understand*: Let him who readeth Daniel's prophecy (for it is our Lord, and not the evangelist who says this) understand, that the end of the city and sanctuary, with the ceasing of the sacrifice and oblation there predicted, is come, and of consequence,

the prophecy we learn from Josephus, who has wrote seven books of the wars of the Jews, wherein he has described with great exactness this scene of desolation in all its dreadful circumstances; and by a variety of dates hath shewed that it happened about forty years after our Lord's death, consequently immediately after the gospel was preached through the whole Roman empire.



quence, the end of the age mentioned by our Lord in the preceding verse. Accordingly, in Luke it is thus expressed, xxi. 20. *And when ye shall see \* Jerusalem encompassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. 21. Then let them † which are in Judea flee to the mountains, in allusion to the history of Lot, and let them which are in the midst of it, depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereunto. Matt. xxiv. 17. Let him which is on the house-top not come down (Mark, go down into the house, neither enter therein) to take any thing out*

\* Luke 20. *Jerusalem encompassed with armies, &c.*] The admonition to them who were in the midst of Jerusalem to depart out, and to them who were in the countries not to enter thereinto, shews that the encompassing of Jerusalem with armies, spoken of in the prophecy, was such as would permit the inhabitants to flee out of it, and those who were in the countries to enter into it. Behold here the wonderful prescience of the Author of the Christian religion. Cestius Gallus, in the beginning of the war, invested Jerusalem, and took Bethsaida or the lower town. Josephus, Bell. ii. 24. says, "If he had continued the siege but a little longer, he would have taken the city. But I think that God being angry with the wicked, would not suffer the war to be ended at that time. For Cestius removed his army, and, having received no loss, very unadvisedly departed from the city." This conduct of the Roman general, so contrary to all the rules of prudence, was doubtless brought to pass by the providence of God, who interposed in this manner for the deliverance of the disciples of his Son. Accordingly Josephus in ch. xxv. of the same book tells us, that "immediately after Cestius' departure, many of the principal Jews daily fled from the city, as from a sinking ship." Among these we may believe there were numbers of the Christians, who remembering their Master's admonition, foresaw what was to happen. Embracing therefore the opportunity afforded them by Cestius' departure, they fled out of Judea, and so escaped the general ruin, as their Master had promised them, Matt. xxiv. 13. Luke xxi. 18. To this agrees what Eusebius tells us, Hist. iii. 5. "That the people of the church in Jerusalem being ordered by an oracle given to the faithful in that place, by revelation, left the city before the war, and dwelt in a city of Perea, the name of which was Pella." Eusebius seems to say, that the Christians were warned to fly by a particular revelation given them at that time. With him Epiphanius agrees, who speaking of the same event, Hæres. Nazaren, § 7. says, "That the Christians in Jerusalem were admonished of its destruction by an angel." Nevertheless, the oracle, or divine admonition, of which these authors speak, seems rather to have been our Lord's prophecy and admonition, to which every circumstance of the history perfectly agrees.

† Luke 21 *Which are in Judea, &c.*] By Judea we are to understand all the southern parts of Palestine, both the plain and the hill countries, which at this time went by the name of Judea. By the mountains, we are to understand the countries on the east side of Jordan, especially those which in the time of the war, were under the government of the younger Agrippa, to whom Claudius gave Batanea and Trachonitis, the tetrarchy of Philip, and Abilene, the tetrarchy of Lysaneas. Nero afterwards added that quarter of Galilee where Tyberias and Tarrichea stood, and in Perea, Julius with its fourteen villages. All these countries remaining in their obedience to the Romans, the people who fled into them were safe. Besides, being mountainous countries, they seem to have been the very place of refuge pointed out to the Christians of those times by their Master. See on John ix. 40. § 84.



*out of his house.* (See on Luke xvii. 31. § 101.) 18. *Neither let him which is in the field, plowing, sowing, or reaping, which kinds of labour they commonly performed with their upper garments off, return back to take (Mark, take up) his clothes.* Luke xxi. 22. *For these be the days of vengeance:* the days wherein God will avenge himself of this nation, and punish it for all its sins; see on Matt. xxiii. 36. § 121.—*that all things which are written, viz. in the law and the prophets, and particularly by the prophet Daniel, may be fulfilled.* Matt. xxiv. 19. *And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days.* In those days of vengeance, women with child, and such as have infants on their breasts, as well as the lame, the blind, and the diseased, shall be particularly unhappy, because they cannot flee from the impending ruin. 20. *But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, when the badness of the roads, and the rigour of the season, will make travelling speedily almost impossible, \* neither on the sabbath-day, when you will think it unlawful.* 21. *For † then (Mark, in those days) shall be great tribulation,* (Luke,

\* Matt. 20. *Neither on the sabbath-day.*] In this direction our Lord by no means approved of the superstitious regard which the Jews paid to the sabbath; far less does he establish the observation of the Jewish sabbath under the gospel. He only declares the inconveniences, which the superstition of the nation would occasion, if their flight should happen on the sabbath. This direction, which was given by Jesus himself, may afford us great comfort. For it shews, that notwithstanding afflictions befall us by the decree of God, the circumstances of them may be mitigated by our prayers.

† Matt. 21. *Then shall be great tribulation, such as was not, &c.*] Never had words a more sad or full accomplishment than these. For the miseries which befell this people about the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, were such as no history can parallel. Within the city the fury of the opposite factions was so great, that they filled all places, and even the temple itself with continual slaughters. Nay, to such a pitch did their madness arise, that they destroyed the very graneries of corn which should have sustained them, and burnt the magazines of arms which should have defended them. By this means when the siege had lasted but two months, the famine began to rage, and at length reduced them to such straits, that the barbarities which they practised, are not to be imagined; see Bell. vi. 11. Even the mothers ate their own children, Bell. vii. 8. In short, from the beginning of the siege to the taking of the city, there were slain by faction, by famine, by pestilence, and by the enemy, no less than eleven hundred thousand in Jerusalem. So that, as Josephus himself observes in his preface to the history of this war, “If all the calamities which the world from the beginning hath seen, were compared with those of the Jews, they would appear inferior.” And that the peculiar hand of Providence was visible in this destruction of the nation, the same author affirms. For, having described the vast multitudes of people that were in Jerusalem, when it was besieged, he says, Bell. vii. 17. “This multitude was assembled together from other places, and was there, by the providence of God, shut up as it were in prison.” Besides he tells us, that Titus himself took notice that the Jews were urged on by God himself to their destruction.



(Luke, *great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people*) such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be : Because God will execute upon the nation at this time, the punishment of all the sins committed by the Jewish people, as a body politic, from the beginning, the calamities befalling them shall be greater than any that ever have been, or ever shall be sent upon a nation. Their sins have been more in number, and greater in guilt, than those of any other nation, because their advantages have been greater. It is therefore fit that they be made the highest example of God's justice in the government of the world, for the instruction of mankind in all generations. Luke xxi. 24. \* *And they shall fall by the edge of the sword,*  
and

\* Luke 24. *And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations.*] The fulfilment of this part of the prophecy, we have Bell. vii. 16. where Josephus describes the sacking of the city. "And now rushing into every lane, they slew whomsoever they found, without distinction, and burnt the houses and all the people who had fled into them. And when they entered for the sake of plunder, they found whole families of dead persons, and houses full of carcases destroyed by famine ; then they came out with their hands empty. And though they thus pitied the dead, they did not feel the same emotion for the living, but killed all they met, whereby they filled the lanes with dead bodies. The whole city ran with blood, insomuch, that many things which were burning, were extinguished by the blood." Thus were the inhabitants of Jerusalem slain with the sword ; thus was she laid even with the ground, and her children with her. Ibid. "The soldiers being now wearied with killing the Jews, and yet a great number remaining alive, Cesar commanded that only the armed, and they who resisted, should be slain. But the soldiers killed also the old and the infirm ; and taking the young and strong prisoners, carried them into the womens court in the temple. Cesar appointed one Fronto, his freed-man and friend, to guard them, and to determine the fate of each. All the robbers and the seditious he slew, one of them betraying another. But picking out such youths as were remarkable for stature and beauty, he reserved them for the triumph. All the rest that were above seventeen years old, he sent bound into Egypt, to be employed in labour there. Titus also sent many of them into the provinces, to be slain in the theatres, by beasts and the sword. And those who were under seventeen years of age, were slain. And during the time Fronto judged them, a thousand died of hunger." Chapter xvii. "Now the number of the captives that were taken during the time of the war, was ninety-seven thousand, and of all that died and were slain during the siege, was eleven hundred thousand, the most of them Jews by nation, though not inhabitants of the place ; for being assembled together from all parts to the feast of unleavened bread, of a sudden they were environed with war." Thus were the Jews led away captive into all nations. However, the falling by the edge of the sword, mentioned in the prophecy, is not to be confined to what happened at the siege. It comprehended all the slaughters that were made of the Jews in the different battles, and sieges, and massacres, both in their own land and out of it, during the whole course of the war. Such as at Alexandria, where fifty thousand perished ; at Cæsarea, ten thousand ; at Scythopolis, thirteen thousand ; at Damascus, ten thousand ; at Ascalon, ten thousand ; at Apheck, fifteen thousand ; upon Gerizim, eleven thousand ; and at Jotapata, thirty thousand.



*and shall be led away captive into all nations :* Great multitudes of them shall be slaughtered ; and those who remain being taken captive, shall be dispersed over the whole earth. This is our Lord's paraphrase on Dan. ix. 26. " And the end thereof," viz. of the city and sanctuary, " shall be with a flood." For as a great flood sweeps all before it, this image strongly represents the depopulation of Judea, not only by the sword, but by the captivities which followed on the conquest thereof. \* *And Jerusalem shall*

land. And thus was verified what our Lord told his disciples, the first time he uttered his prophecy concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, that wherever the carcass was, there the eagles should be gathered together, Luke xvii. 37.

\* Luke 24. *And Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, &c.* The accomplishment of this part of the prophecy, as indeed of every article of it, is wonderful. For after the Jews were almost utterly destroyed by death and captivity, Vespasian commanded the whole land of Judea to be sold. Bell. vii. 26. " At that time Cesar wrote to Bassus, and to Litus Maximus, the procurator, to sell the whole land of the Jews ; for he did not build any city there, but appropriated their country to himself, leaving there only eight hundred soldiers, and giving them a place to dwell in, called *Emmaus*, thirty stadiums from Jerusalem ; and he imposed a tribute upon all the Jews wheresoever they lived, commanding every one of them to bring two drachms into the capitol, according as in former times they were wont to pay unto the temple of Jerusalem. And this was the state of the Jews at this time." Thus was Jerusalem in particular, with its territory, possessed by the Gentiles, becoming Vespasian's property, who sold it to such Gentiles as chose to settle there. That Jerusalem continued in this desolate state, we learn from Dio ; for he tells us, that the emperor Adrian rebuilt it, sent a colony thither to inhabit it, and called it *Ælia*. But he altered its situation, leaving out Sion and Bezetha, and enlarging it so as to comprehend Calvary, where our Lord was crucified. Moreover, Eusebius informs us, that Adrian made a law, that no Jew should come into the region around Jerusalem, Hist. xxi. 6. So that the Jews being banished, such a number of aliens came into Jerusalem, that it became a city and colony of the Romans, Hist. iv. 6. In latter times, when Julian apostatized to heathenism, being sensible that the evident accomplishment of our Lord's prophecies concerning the Jewish nation, made a strong impression upon the Gentiles, and was a principal means of their conversion, he resolved to deprive Christianity of this support, by bringing the Jews to occupy their own land, and by allowing them the exercise of their religion, and a form of civil government. For this purpose he resolved to rebuild Jerusalem, to people it with Jews, and to rear up the temple on its ancient foundations, because there only he knew they would offer prayers and sacrifices. In the prosecution of this design, he wrote a letter to the community of the Jews, which is still extant among his other works, inviting them to return to their native country ; and for their encouragement, he says to them among other things : " The holy city, Jerusalem, which of many years ye have desired to see inhabited, I will rebuild by mine own labour, and will inhabit it." *Judei in novum*, Epist. 25. And now the emperor having made great preparations, began the execution of his scheme with rebuilding the temple ; but his workmen were soon obliged to desist, by an immediate and evident interposition of God. Take an account of this matter in the words of Ammianus Marcellinus, an heathen historian, and therefore an author of unsuspected



*shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, και παταμειν υπο θνων, shall be trodden under foot of the Gentiles; shall be utterly destroyed by the Gentiles, and continue in their possession, as appears from the*

unsuspected credit. Lib. xxiii. ab initio. *Ambitosum quoddam templum apud Hierosolymam, &c.* "He resolved to build, at an immense expence, a certain lofty temple at Jerusalem; and gave it in charge to Alypius of Antioch, who had formerly governed in Britain, to hasten the work. When therefore Alypius, with great earnestness, applied himself to the execution of this business, and the governor of the province assisted him in it, terrible balls of fire bursting forth near the foundation, with frequent explosions, and divers times burning the workmen, rendered the place inaccessible. Thus the fire continually driving them away, the work ceased." This fact is attested likewise by Zemus David, a Jew, who honestly confesses that Julian was hindered by God in this attempt. It is attested likewise by Nazianzen and Chrysostom among the Greeks; by Ambrose and Ruffin among the Latins, who lived at the very time when the thing happened; by Theodoret and Sozomen. of the orthodox persuasion; by Philostorgius, an Arian, in the extracts of his history made by Photius, Lib. vii. No. 9.; and by Socrates, a favourer of the Novatians, who wrote his history within the space of fifty years after the thing happened, and whilst the eye-witnesses thereof were yet alive. I shall only relate the testimonies of Sozomen and Chrysostom. The former, in his Ecclesiastical History, lib. v. cap. 22. says, "This wonder is believed, and freely spoken of by all; nor is it denied by any. Or if it should seem incredible to any, let them believe those who have heard it from the mouth of the eye witnesses, who are yet alive. Let them likewise believe the Jews and the Gentiles who have left the work unfinished, or, to speak more properly, who have not been able to begin it." Chrysostom advers. Judæos, speaking of the same subject, says, Orat. ii. "And now, if you go to Jerusalem, you will see the foundations lying still bare; and if you enquire the cause of this," namely, in Jerusalem, the scene of the miracle, "you will hear no other than that which I have mentioned; and of this all we Christians are witnesses, the thing being done not long since, and in our own time." Thus, while Jews and heathens, under the direction of a Roman emperor, united their whole force to baffle our Lord's prediction, they did but still the more conspicuously accomplish his saying, that "Jerusalem should be trodden of the Gentiles, till the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled." How exactly this passage of the prophecy has been fulfilled, we learn also from Benjamin of Tudela, a celebrated Spanish Jew of the twelfth century, who travelled into all parts to visit those of his own nation, and to learn an exact state of their affairs. In his Itinerary he tells us, that in Jerusalem he found only two hundred Jews. Sandys says, that the Holy Land "is for the most part inhabited now by Moors and Arabians; those possessing the vallies, and these the mountains. Turks there be few; but many Greeks, with other Christians of all sects and nations, such as impute to the place an adherent holiness. Here be also some Jews, yet inherit they no part of the land; but in their own country do live as aliens." Travels, Book III. page 114. 7th Edition. The divinity of our Lord's prediction will still more clearly appear, if to the above we add the fact known throughout all Europe and Asia at this day; namely, that the Jews are still exiles from their own country, and have continued to be so ever since Titus dispersed them. In former times the Jews, after being led away captive, were re-established: Why then should this captivity have lasted so long? Why should the effects of Titus's fury be indelible? God decreed that it should be so. "Jerusalem is to be



the subsequent clause, *until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled*; the time determined in the council of God for the conversion of the Gentiles. The apostle Paul has given us a clear explication of this passage, Rom. xi. 25. "Blindness in part has happened to Israel, till the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, and so all Israel shall be saved, as it is written," This part of the prophecy answers to Dan. ix. 27. "He shall make it (Jerusalem) desolate, even until the consummation," viz. of wrath upon this people, "and that determined be poured upon the desolate." The meaning of both passages is, that after the destruction here foretold, Jerusalem shall continue desolate, until God has poured upon it the whole wrath he has determined; and this wrath will not be finished until the Gentiles are converted. Mark xiii. 20. *And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved.* The destruction of the nation shall go on so fast in those days of vengeance, that unless God had made them fewer in number than the sins of the nation deserve, not one Jew should remain alive. The truth is, so fierce and so obstinate were the quarrels which, during the siege, raged among the Jews, both within the walls of Jerusalem, and abroad in the country, that the whole land became a scene of desolation and bloodshed; and had the siege continued much longer, the whole nation had been destroyed, according to what our Lord here declares. *But for the elects sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days.* The elect here are such of the Jews as were already converted, or to be converted, and particularly the Jews that were to be brought

be trodden of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled," and no power in the universe can frustrate his decree. For this reason likewise, though the Jews are at present, and have been through the whole period of their dispersion, vastly more numerous than they ever were in the most happy times of their commonwealth, none of the many efforts which they made to recover their own country has proved successful. Moreover, while every dispersed people mentioned in history, has been swallowed up of the nations among whom they were dispersed, without leaving the smallest trace of their ever having existed, the Jews continue, after so many ages, a distinct people in their dispersion. The universal contempt into which they are fallen, one should think, ought to have made them conceal whatever served to distinguish them, and prompted them to mix with the rest of mankind. But in fact it has not done so. The Jews, in all countries, by openly separating from the nations who rule them, subject themselves to hatred and derision; nay, in several places, they have exposed themselves to death, by bearing about with them the outward marks of their descent. By this unexampled constancy, they have preserved themselves a distinct people every where. But of this constancy can any better account be given, than that it is the means by which God verifies the prediction of his Son? He has declared, that when the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled, the Jews shall be converted; and therefore, through the whole course of their dispersion, they must continue a distinct people. If the hand of Providence is not visible in these things, I cannot tell where it will be found.



brought in with the fulness of the Gentiles, as the apostle speaks.\* The elect are those Gentiles also who were to be converted, as by all the proofs of Christianity, so more especially by the argument arising from the preservation of the Jews. See on Matt. xxiv. 31. p. 657. The meaning therefore is: But for the sake of those who are to be converted to Christianity in that and after ages, God hath determined that the days of vengeance shall be fewer in number than the iniquity of the nation deserves.

Mark xiii. 21. *And then, if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ, or lo, he is there; believe him not.* Matt. xxiv. 24. \* *For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets.* During

\* Matt. 24. *For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets.*] Grotius and others think our Lord had Barchochebas in view here, because he expressly called himself Messiah. and pretended to work great miracles. Nevertheless, as the passage describes what was to happen about the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, it cannot be applied to Barchochebas, who arose in the reign of Adrian, about sixty years after. Josephus, Ant. xx. 6. tells us, that under the government of Felix, "the whole country was full of magicians, who deceived the people." In the same chapter he says, "The magicians and deceivers persuaded the common people to follow them into the wilderness, promising to shew them evident signs and miracles done (*κατα τὴν θεῶν προνοίαν*) according to the counsel of God." It seems these impostors pretended, that the miracles they were going to perform, were those which God had predicted Messiah would perform. Perhaps they assumed the title directly, though Josephus, after the destruction of his nation, was ashamed to make any mention of Messiah at all, or of the prophecies relating to him. After the example of Moses, these false Christs appealed to the miracles which they pretended to perform, in proof of their being sent to deliver the nation from slavery. Moreover, they commonly shewed themselves in desert places; for the historian tells us, that they persuaded the common people to follow them thither, promising to work miracles there. This circumstance our Lord distinctly foretold, Matt. xxiv. 26. "If they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert, go not forth." The following passage will shew these things still more clearly, Bell. ii. 12. where, speaking of affairs under Felix, the historian says, "Impostors and deceivers, under pretence of inspiration, attempting innovations and changes, made the common people mad, and led them into the wilderness, promising that God would there shew them signs of liberty," *σημεῖα ἐλευθέριας*, miracles, in proof that they should be delivered from the Roman yoke, and obtain their liberty. This was the benefit the nation expected from Messiah; and those deceivers who promised it to them were readily believed: for the common people daily expected that Messiah would appear, and put them in possession of universal empire. Every impostor, therefore, who assumed that character, and promised them deliverance, was quickly followed and obeyed. Hence the propriety of Josephus's observation, that the impostors made the common people mad.

Ant. xx. 6. "About that time, (namely, under the government of Felix) there came to Jerusalem from Egypt a certain person, (an Egyptian Jew) calling himself a prophet, who persuaded the people to go with him to the mount of Olives, which is situated opposite to the city at the distance of five stadiums; for he would shew them from that place the walls of Jerusalem falling down, and promised to give them an entrance into the city."

He



ing the terrible calamities here foretold, the expectations of the nation were all turned towards their Messiah ; for they thought if ever he was to appear, it would be then, to deliver them from the impending destruction. Hence many arose, pretending to be Messiah, and boasting that they would deliver the nation ; the effect of which was, that the multitude giving credit to these deceivers, became obstinate in their opposition to the Romans, whereby their destruction was rendered both the more severe, and the more inevitable ; see on Matt. xxiv. 11. *And shall shew great signs and wonders, insomuch, that (if it were possible) they shall deceive the very elect.* They shall perform most astonishing miracles, such as, if it were possible, would deceive even the faithful themselves. That the false Christs which arose in Judea during the war performed wonderful things, appears from this, that Josephus always represents them as magicians and sorcerers, and often takes notice, that they promised to the people to shew them great miracles. See the note on this verse. Mark xiii. 23. *But take ye heed ; behold, I have foretold you all things : Since I have forewarned you, be upon your guard against these deceivers.* Matt. xxiv. 26. *Wherefore, if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert, (see on Matt. xxiv. 24. p. 653.) go not forth ; behold, he is in the secret chambers, believe it not.* The partizans of the false Christs might pretend that Messiah was concealed a while for fear of the Romans ; and the weaker sort of Christians, without this warning, might have imagined that Christ was actually returned to deliver the nation in its extremity, and to punish their enemies ; and that he would shew himself as soon as it was proper. (See on Luke iv. 6. § 17.) 27. *For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west ; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.* This is the

He speaks of this deceiver likewise, Bell. ii. 12. where he calls him a false prophet and magician, and tells, that “ he gathered together thirty thousand men on the mount of Olives, proposing to go thence, and take Jerusalem by force, to drive out the Roman garrison, and to rule over the people.” Here this impostor plainly acted the Messiah. But Felix getting notice of his designs, came out and routed him.

Ant. xx. 2. *fine*, the same historian tells us, that “ under the procuratorship of Fadus, a certain magician named Theudas, persuaded a great many people to take all their goods, and follow him to the river Jordan ; for he said he was a prophet, and told them that the river would divide itself into two parts at his command, and yield them a free passage.” This Theudas was a different person from him whom Gamaliel spake of, Acts v. 37. for this latter appeared before Judas of Galilee arose in the days of the taxing.

Bell. vii. 11. Josephus having told how the Romans stormed and burnt the porch of the temple, in which 6000 Jews perished, concludes his relation thus : “ A certain false prophet was the cause of their death, who the same day preached in the city, and commanded them to go into the temple, and behold signs of their deliverance ; for many false prophets were then suborned by the tyrants, to persuade them to expect God’s help.”



the explication of the preceding verse. The coming of the Son of man shall be in a very different manner, and for very different ends from what you are imagining. It shall be like lightning, swift, unexpected, and destructive. (See on Luke xvii. 24. § 101.)

28. *For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together.* This is an explication of the precedent verse. The coming of the Son of man shall be like lightning, swift and destructive. Yet he will not come personally; his servants only shall come, the Roman armies, who by his command shall destroy this nation, as eagles devour their prey. See on Luke xvii. 37. § 101.

Having thus given them a particular account of the various circumstances which should precede and accompany the destruction of Jerusalem, he next described the destruction of the Jewish polity, and the abolition of the Mosaic economy, in all the pomp of language and imagery made use of by the ancient prophets when they foretold the overthrow of cities and states. Mark xiii. 24. *But in those days after that tribulation, (Matt. Immediately after the tribulation of those days) after the tribulation of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the leading away of the captives; \* the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light; 25. And the stars of heaven shall fall, (Luke, And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars):* high figurative expressions, which signify the decaying of all the glory, excellency, and prosperity of the nation, and the introduction of universal sadness, misery, and confusion. The Jewish polity, both civil and religious, shall be destroyed. The Jews shall be no more a people united under a form of government administered by themselves, and possessing their own country. Luke xxi. 25.

*And*

\* Mark 24. *The sun shall be darkened, &c.*] See Isa. xiii. 10. where the destruction of Babylon is foretold in similar terms; as is likewise that of Idumea, Isa. xxxiv. 4, 5. and that of Egypt, Ezek. xxxii. 7. See also Esther viii. 16. Jer. xv. 9. Joel ii. 10, 11. 30, 31. iii. 15. Amos viii. 9, 10. Besides, Lightfoot has proved from the Talmud, that the Jews used these phrases in describing the ruin even of a single family. Maimonides More Nevoch. p. 2. c. 29. gives the reason of this phraseology. His words are: "As Isaiah, speaking of such as have been conquered, says, Their sun and moon have lost their light; so he says also of conquerors, That their sun and moon increase their light. For experience proves, that the eyes of men in great misery grow dim, and do not see the light in its full splendour, the nerves being weakened for want of spirits. On the other hand, when by joy the soul is enlarged, and the animal spirits are conveyed in abundance to the organs of vision, the sun and the light appear greater than before." This gives a beautiful turn to Isa. xxx. 26. "Moreover, the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound." Also it shews why our Lord chose to express the destruction that was coming on the Jews, by the darkening of the sun and moon, and by the falling of the stars.



*And upon the earth, or rather, upon the land, distress of nations, with perplexity : the Jewish tetrarchies shall be distressed and perplexed : the sea and the waves roaring.* The roaring of the sea and the waves may be metaphorical ; for in the first clause of this verse, the signs in the sun, and the moon, and the stars, are plainly so, answering to what is thus expressed by Mark, *The sun shall be darkened, and the moon, &c.* For though the darkening of the sun and the moon may be interpreted literally of eclipses, no reader can understand the falling of the stars literally. Matt. xxiv. 29. *And the powers of the heavens shall be shaken :* The whole Jewish polity, government, laws, and religion, which were the work of heaven, or which, containing in them the light of truth, were figured by the sun, and moon, and stars, in the preceding verse, and consequently might in this be called the powers of heaven, shall be utterly dissolved. Moreover, because the disciples had asked what should be the sign of his coming, and because the Pharisees had often, in the course of his ministry, demanded the sign from heaven, he told them, that after the tribulation of those days, when the sun should be darkened, they should see the sign from heaven. Matt. xxiv. 30. *And then shall appear \* the sign of the Son of man in heaven ; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn ;* all the enemies of the Son of man shall be in great distress, when he comes to put down their authority, and erect his kingdom ; because heavy destruction will fall upon them. *And (Luke, Then) they shall see the Son of man † coming in the clouds of heaven, (Luke, in a cloud) with power and great glory :* They shall see the accomplishment of what Daniel foretold, by the figurative expression of “ the Son of man coming

\* Matt. 30. *The sign of the Son of man, &c.*] The sign from heaven, which both the disciples and the Pharisees expected, was some visible appearance of Messiah in the clouds, and some miraculous interposition of his power, by which the Romans, the masters of the world, were to be destroyed, and an universal empire over all nations erected in behalf of the Jews. This sign they were led to expect, because Daniel had said prophetically of the Son of man, (chap. vii. 13.) that he saw him coming in the clouds of heaven, and that there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all nations and languages should serve him. Nevertheless, by the coming of the Son of man in the clouds, Daniel meant his interposing for the erection of his kingdom, and for the destruction of his enemies, particularly the unbelieving Jews : and by the kingdom over all nations he meant a spiritual kingdom, a new dispensation of religion, the gospel, which should comprehend the whole world within its pale. Therefore, to shew the disciples that they had mistaken the prophecy, which referred wholly to the destruction of Jerusalem, and to the conversion of the Gentiles, he adopted it into his prediction of these events, and thereby settled its true meaning.

† Ibid. *Coming in the clouds of heaven.*] This figurative expression, in several other passages of Scripture, signifies God's interposing evidently and irresistibly, to execute vengeance on a wicked generation, and to assert his own government over the world. See 2 Sam. xxii. 10,—12. Psal. xcvi. 2. Isa. xix. 1.



coming in the clouds of heaven ;” for the destruction of the nation by the Roman armies, and the spreading of the gospel in consequence thereof; according to this my prediction, shall demonstrate to all the unprejudiced among them, that I am *the Son of man* prophesied of by Daniel, and that the conversion of the world to Christianity, is the glorious universal kingdom which Daniel foretold was to be given to the Son of man ; and this is the true sign from heaven about which the nation has been so solicitous.

31. *And he shall \* send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other* (Mark, *from the uttermost part of the earth, to the uttermost part of heaven*) See on Mark xiii. 20. p. 652. where the *elect* are mentioned in this prophecy once before, and where the name denotes such of the Jews as were to be converted to Christianity, and who, for that reason, were suffered to escape the general calamity. Here therefore their conversion is described as happening more especially after the destruction of Jerusalem, and as becoming the foundation of that great universal spiritual empire, which the Son of man appeared on earth to erect. Moreover, as this part of the prophecy is a repetition of the prophecy of Daniel above-mentioned, in which the erection of Messiah’s kingdom over all nations, kindreds and languages, is described, the *elect* must here signify likewise all such of the Gentiles of that age, as were to be converted. The truth is, no event whatever could so effectually contribute to the conversion both of Jews and Gentiles as the downfall of the Jewish religious institutions, which all along this people opposed to Christianity. For it is a known fact, that while the Jewish constitution subsisted, the spreading of the gospel was hindered, both by the believing and unbelieving Jews ; the former disgusting the Gentiles, by endeavouring to subject them to the law of Moses ; and the latter terrifying them by the persecutions which they raised against the disciples, even in heathen countries. But the abolition of the Mosaical institutions confuted the error of the one, and the destruction of the nation brake the power of the other. The success therefore of the gospel, depending in a great

\* Matt. 31 *Send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet.*] The true meaning of the clause, *they shall gather together his elect* &c. being as in the paraphrase, it will easily be allowed, that by the *angels* in this clause are to be understood the ministers of the gospel ; and by *the great sound of a trumpet*, wherewith they were to be sent forth, is meant their powerful preaching of the gospel. Agreeably to this interpretation, we find the name *αγγελος*, *angel*, given to common messengers, James ii. 25. and to the ministers of the Asian churches, Rev ii. and to prophets, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16. and to priests, Mal. ii. 7. And the preaching of the messengers of God is compared to the sound of a trumpet, Isa. lviii. 1. Jer. vi. 17. Ezek. xxxiii. 3,—6.



great measure upon the downfall of the Jewish state, was very properly predicted as the natural consequence thereof. Moreover, as this prophecy described so minutely the catastrophe of the Jewish state, its accomplishment could not but make a strong impression upon the minds of the Gentiles, as we know in fact it did, bringing over many of them to Christianity. Accordingly it follows, Luke xxi. 28. *And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.* As soon as you see the things I have been predicting begin to come to pass, rejoice at the prospect of your deliverance from the Jews, your greatest persecutors, for that deliverance is at hand.

Matt. xxiv. 32. *Now learn a parable of the fig-tree (Luke, and all the trees): When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know (Luke, of your own selves) that summer is near.* 33. *So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near; the end of the world or age, the end of the Jewish dispensation is near, even at the doors.* Accordingly, Luke expresses it thus, xxi. 31. *Know ye that the kingdom of God, the full establishment of the gospel-dispensation, called in Scripture the kingdom of God and of heaven, is nigh at hand.* Matt. xxiv. 34. *Verily I say unto you, that \* this generation shall not pass (Luke, away, see on Matt. xxiv. 3. p. 637.) till all these things be fulfilled.* 35. *† Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away:* The present generation shall not die, till

\* Matt. 34. *This generation shall not pass, &c.]* Accordingly our Lord, on other occasions, spake of his own coming, as to happen in that age. Thus, Mark ix. 1. "There be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God." Matt. xxvi. 64. "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven."

† Matt. 35. *Heaven and earth shall pass away, &c.]* The observation of Eusebius deserves a place here. "Whosoever (says he) shall compare the words of our Saviour with the history which Josephus has wrote of the war, cannot but admire the wisdom of Christ, and acknowledge his prediction to be divine." For as the Jewish nation was at this time in the most flourishing state, the event here foretold was altogether improbable. Besides, the circumstances of the destruction mentioned in the prophecy, are very numerous, and surprisngly particular. The time when it was to be accomplished is expressly determined, being to happen before that generation died, and yet not till the gospel was preached to all nations, and the Jews had persecuted its preachers in the most violent manner. The language also in which the whole is conceived, is without the least ambiguity. It is therefore a prophecy of such a kind as could not possibly be forged by an impostor. Nevertheless, the disciples did not then understand any part of it; which is the more to be wondered at, as it was both plain and particular, and had been delivered once before, Luke xvii. 20. § 101. Probably they applied all the dreadful passages of it to the heathen nations, especially the Romans, whose ambition they thought would lead them to oppose the erection of their Master's kingdom with all the forces of their empire.



till every article of this prophecy is accomplished. And you may expect the dissolution of the frame of nature sooner than the least iota of this prophecy to fail of being fulfilled, within the time I have just now mentioned. This is the most astonishing part of the whole; for it determines the time of the completion of all the particulars mentioned, to the lives of the men of the age then in being; and it determines this not simply, but with an asseveration, both to make the disciples attentive, and to strike future ages with admiration when they should read this prophecy, and see every circumstance of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the Jewish state, with its consequences, even in the remotest ages, clearly foretold, and the time in which it was to happen precisely marked. Moreover, thus our Lord, in the fullest manner, shewed the greatness of his own fore-knowledge, and by consequence demonstrated the divinity of his mission. Every thinking person therefore, who compares the events with this prediction, must do violence to his conscience, if he does not acknowledge Jesus to be a prophet commissioned of God. Mark xiii. 32. \* *But of that day, and that hour, knoweth no man: I have*

\* Mark 31. *But of that day, &c.*] It may seem strange, that the Son, who declared that he would come before the generation then in being went off the stage, and who in the prophecy had been pointing out the various signs by which the disciples might foresee his approach, should not have known the day and the hour, or the particular time of his own coming. This difficulty some endeavour to obviate, by supposing that our Lord spake of himself here only as a man. But the name *Father* following that of *Son*, shews that he spake of himself as the Son of God, and not as the Son of man. Besides, the gradation in the sentence seems to forbid this solution. For the Son being mentioned after the angels, and immediately before the Father, is thereby declared to be more excellent than they, which he is not in respect of his human nature; and therefore he cannot be supposed to speak of himself in that nature. The proper translation of the passage, I think, affords a better solution. The word *οὐδὲν* here seems to have the force of the Hebrew conjugation *biphil*, which in verbs denoting action, makes that action, whatever it is, pass to another. Wherefore *οὐδὲν*, which properly signifies, *I know*, used in the sense of the conjugation *biphil*, signifies, *I make another to know, I declare*. The word has this meaning without dispute, 1 Cor. ii. 2. “I determined (*οὐδὲν*) to know nothing among you but Jesus Christ, and him crucified,” i.e. I determined to make known, to preach nothing among you, but Jesus Christ. So likewise in the text, “But of that day, and that hour, none maketh you to know,” none hath power to make you know it; just as the phrase, Matt. xx. 23. “is not mine to give,” signifies, “is not in my power to give:”—“no, not the angels, neither the Son, but the Father.” Neither man nor angel, nor even the Son himself, can reveal the day and hour of the destruction of Jerusalem to you; because the Father hath determined that it should not be revealed. The divine wisdom saw fit to conceal from the apostles the precise period of the destruction of Jerusalem, in order that they might be laid under a necessity of watching continually. And this vigilance was especially proper at that time, be-  
cause



have told you, that all the things I have been predicting shall happen before this generation dies. Nevertheless, to point out the time to you more particularly, by shewing you the precise year, and month, and day of the several events, is not in the power of any man; no man hath it in his power to make you know this, *no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father* (Matt. only). In particular, concerning himself, Jesus declared that he could not make them know the day and hour of his coming to destroy Jerusalem, not because he was ignorant of that event, but because the Father, as governor of the world, had put the times and seasons in his own power, Acts i. 7. in order that, from the uncertainty of the thing, the disciples might be always kept upon their guard; for which reason, he had given his Son no commission to reveal it more particularly than he has done in this celebrated prediction. Thus Jesus described the destruction of the Jewish nation, marked a variety of particulars which were to accompany or precede it, and assured his disciples that the day and hour thereof was not to be discovered to them. He only told them, that it would be very unexpected, and urged the necessity of watchfulness from that consideration. They were to be continually looking out, that when they discerned the signs he had been describing, they might foresee their danger and fly. Matt. xxiv. 37. *But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be, &c.* See on Luke xvii. 26 § 101. Mark xiii. 35. *Watch ye therefore, for ye know not when the master of the house cometh; \* at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning: 36. Lest coming suddenly, he find you sleeping.*

But as the miseries which men were to undergo at the destruction of Jerusalem, the reasons of that destruction, the passions which

cause the success of the gospel depended, in a great measure, upon the activity and exemplary lives of those who first published it.

And now, I appeal to every unprejudiced person who reads this prophecy, whether after the most accurate examination thereof it does not appear, that every expression in it, may, without the least straining, be applied to the destruction of Jerusalem, and the Jewish nation. In this light, therefore, let us view that notable stroke of wit, by which a modern infidel would turn it into ridicule. "The prophecy of Christ (says he) about his coming again, which he expressly limits to the life of some of his auditors, and to the present generation, is wholly mystical. For it is evident that the apostles, who understood him literally, were all mistaken, and should have understood him mystically, as they did at length, when they came to understand, that a thousand years were with the Lord as one day, and one day as a thousand years."

\* Mark 35. *At even, &c.*] Ωψις, evening, answers to the first watch of the night, which began at sun-setting, and ended at nine. Μισοιχτις answers to the second watch, which ended at twelve. Αλετροφωνα answers to the third watch, which ended at three in the morning. Πρωι answers to the fourth watch, which ended at six. There is mention made of this watch, Mark xiv. 25. See also the third paragraph of § 149.



which its approach would raise in their minds, together with the suddenness and unexpectedness of it, nearly resemble what shall happen at the destruction of the world and the general judgment, it was natural for our Lord on this occasion to put the disciples in mind of that judgment, and to exhort them to the faithful discharge of their duty, from the consideration of the unexpectedness of his coming to call every particular person to an account at death. This exhortation begins, Matt. xxiv. 44. *Therefore be ye also ready ; for in such an hour as you think not, the Son of man cometh.* 45. *Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season ?* See the form and structure of this parable explained on Luke xii. 42. § 88. 46. *Blessed is that servant whom his lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing :* You, the ministers of religion, ought to be particularly faithful in the discharge of your duty ; for it is not an ordinary trust that is committed to your charge. You are stewards, whose business it is to take care of the whole family, and who, because of the influence which your example may have upon the rest, ought to be remarkably diligent, that you may provoke your fellows to be frugal, active and sober. Your duty is, to be well acquainted with the stores of the evangelical truths, and to understand how they may be best applied. You should know likewise the various characters of the persons under your charge, that you may be able to give every one of them his portion of meat in due season. And if, when I come, I find you thus employed, you are blessed ; for I will highly reward you with the joys of my kingdom, even as an earthly master bestows particular marks of respect on such servants as have been remarkably faithful in any important trust. Matt. xxiv. 47. *Verily I say unto you, that he shall make him ruler over all his goods.* On the other hand, if you behave like wicked stewards, who, because their lord delays his coming, beat their fellow-servants, and get drunk with fots and epicures ; if you tyrannize over the consciences of your brethren, neglect the duties of your function, and give yourselves up to sensual pleasures, I will come when you little think of it, and will make you dreadful examples of my indignation, by the severe punishments which I will inflict upon you. 48. *But and if that servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming,* 49 *And shall begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken.* 50. *The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not ware of ;* 51. *And shall \* cut him asunder, and (or) appoint him his portion with the*

\* Matt. 51. *Cut him asunder.*] This was one of the heaviest kinds of punishments and only used, 1 Sam. xv. 34. 2 Sam. xii. 31. Dan. ix. 5. iii. 29. Apocryphal additions to Dan. xiii. 55,—59. A. Gellius, lib. xx. cap. 1. In



*the hypocrites* \* : *there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.* See on Luke xii. 46. § 88. It is remarkable, that in the parable the crime of the unfaithful steward is said to have been sensuality, particularly drunkenness, than which a more abominable vice can hardly be named. A drunkard ! one who employs himself in erasing the illustrious signature of reason, which God stamped upon him in creation, as the prerogative of his nature, and who makes himself incapable of his duty, while he is ready to commit every sin to which a temptation offers. What a monster is this ! and how unlikely to lead others in the way of eternal life !

In the passage first cited, we are told that Samuel hewed Agag to pieces. Wherefore, as this action proceeded from the greatness of the prophet's wrath, the same punishment inflicted on the slothful, sensual, merciless steward, fitly expresses the greatness of his lord's indignation.

\* *Ib. And appoint him his portion with the hypocrites.*] In ancient times the stewards of great families were slaves as well as the servants of a lower class, being raised to that trust on account of their fidelity, wisdom, sobriety, and other good qualities. If any steward, therefore, in the absence of his lord, behaved as is represented in the parable, it was a plain proof, that the virtues on account of which he was raised were counterfeit, and by consequence that he was an hypocrite. Slaves of this character, among other chastisements, were sometimes condemned to work in the mines. And as this was one of the most grievous punishments, when they first entered, nothing was heard among them but weeping and gnashing of teeth, on account of the intolerable fatigue to which they were subjected in these hideous caverns, without hope of release. "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." But because the immediate effect of being cut asunder is death, and not a state of bitter lamentation, the Greek particle of connection may be understood in this verse disjunctively, "shall cut him asunder, or appoint him his portion with the hypocrites, there shall be weeping," unless we can suppose, that in the latter clause our Lord speaks not according to the form, but the meaning of his parable. The truth is, as cutting asunder gives us a lively idea of the torment of an awakened conscience, the portion of hypocrites, is a proper emblem to represent the melancholy state of the damned, who are shut up for ever in the dreadful dungeon of hell, never more to see the delightful light of God's countenance, whereby the whole spiritual creation is enlivened, and made unspeakably happy.

§ CXXIV. *Jesus delivers the parable of the ten virgins. He delivers likewise the parable of the talents the second time, see § 109. and the parable of the sheep and the goats, representing the last judgment.* Matt. xxv. 1,—46.

OUR Lord having mentioned the rewards and punishments of a future state, in order to animate his disciples to the vigorous discharge of their duty, it was easy and elegant to pass from that subject to the consideration of the general judgment, at which these rewards shall be distributed in their utmost extent. And therefore, to rouse men in every age, he has given a striking representation



presentation of the last judgment, with its consequences, in three excellent parables.

The first is the parable of the ten virgins, who waited to meet the bridegroom. Matt. xxv. 1. *Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom:* At the general judgment, the character, conduct, and lot of the subjects of the kingdom of heaven, i. e. of the professors of the gospel, may be represented by the character, conduct, and fate of virgins at a wedding. In those countries, it seems, the bridegroom commonly brought home his bride in the evening. And that she might be received at his house in a suitable manner, his female friends of the younger sort were invited to come and wait with lamps, till some of his retinue, dispatched before the rest, brought word that he was at hand. On this, they went forth with their lamps trimmed, to welcome him, and conduct him with his bride into the house. And for this service, they had the honour of being guests at the marriage-feast. 2. *And five of them were wise, and five were foolish* 3. *They that were foolish, took their lamps, and took no oil with them:* 4. *But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.* In the parable, five of the virgins, who thus waited for the bridegroom, were so foolish as to take only a little oil in their lamps to serve the present occasion. But the other five being more wise, knew that the coming of the bridegroom was uncertain; for which reason, besides filling their lamps at first, they prudently took a quantity of oil in their vessels to supply their lamps, that they might be in readiness to go forth at a moment's warning. It happened however, that while the bridegroom tarried, all the virgins, being tired with long watching, were overcome with sleep. 5. *While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.* The wise virgins as well as the foolish slumbered. For even in the best, the faculties of the soul cannot always be upon the stretch. Besides, having tarried so long, they began to think he would not come that night; and in consequence of this imagination, they bowed under the weight of duty. At length, in the middle of the night, the call was given. 6. *And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him.* The cry being loud, they all awakened, and set about trimming their lamps. But the oil in those that belonged to the foolish virgins being consumed, they were in the utmost confusion when they found them gone out; and having nothing in their vessels to trim them with, they began to see their mistake. In this extremity they intreated their companions to give them a little; but the latter excused themselves, having none to spare. 7. *Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps.* 8. *And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out.* 9. *But the wise answered,*



*ed, saying, Not so, lest there be not enough for us and you ; but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. The foolish virgins therefore were obliged to go away, and buy for themselves. But while they were on this errand, behold the bridegroom arrived, and they that were ready went in with him to the feast, and the door was shut. By and by the others also came, and knocking loud, cried to the bridegroom, beseeching him to order his servants to open the door, and give them admission. Matt. xxv. 10. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and they that were ready, having gone forth at the call, with their lamps trimmed, went in with him to the marriage-feast, and the door was shut. 11. Afterwards came also the other virgins, who had gone away to buy oil, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. 12 But he answered and said. Verily I say unto you, I know you not. The bridegroom was heard answering from within : Ye pretended to be my friends, and to do me honour on this occasion ; but ye have not acted as friends, for which reason I know you not ; I do not acknowledge you as my friends, and will have nothing to do with you.*

In this parable the characters and final judgment of the subjects of the kingdom of heaven are described, that is to say, of persons who have enjoyed the outward dispensation of the gospel, and by professing themselves to be Christians, pretended to honour Christ. Some with the fair light of an outward profession in their hands, have the principles of the divine life in their heart, a stock of oil to keep that light continually burning, both pure and clear ; by which means they persevere in goodness to the end. But others having the blaze of a profession, and nothing to keep it alive, it must needs end in smoke and darkness, failing them when they have most occasion for it. *The slumbering* of the virgins denotes that frame of mind, that distraction and dissipation of thought, which good men sometimes fall into by reason of their necessary worldly business. For although God must never be forgotten, the state of human affairs is such, that it is hardly possible to be so intent on our spiritual journey, that no cares shall ever retard or entangle us. Hence it comes to pass, that even those who are most vigilant do sometimes slumber, or, to all outward appearance, are off their guard, like the wicked ; but with this difference still, that though the exercise of grace, at least so far as it consists in the sensible emotions of holy affections, may for a time be interrupted, these holy affections really subsist in their hearts, ready to be called forth into act. Whereas the wicked are wholly destitute of them, not in act only, but in principle also. The two states of mind are excellently represented by the *lamp's burning dimly for want of trimming*, and by *its going out for want of oil*. The *midnight cry*, raised at the coming of the bridegroom, while the virgins were asleep, shews how



how suddenly and unexpectedly some are called away by death, so that little or no preparation can be made for the approaching judgment, in the confusion and perplexity of a death-bed sickness. In this parable therefore our Lord has taught us, that unless we persevere in grace, having it always at least in habit, and ready to be brought into exercise as occasion requires, we shall be excluded from the abodes of the blessed without remedy, though we may have expressed considerable alacrity and diligence for a while. Also that the grace of other men, and their good works, shall stand us in no stead at the day of judgment. To conclude, as the parable represents the suddenness of Christ's coming to call every particular person off the stage, it shews us both the folly and danger of delaying religion to a death-bed, and powerfully enforces habitual watchfulness, both in the acquisition and exercise of grace, upon all men in every age, from the consideration of the uncertainty of life. Accordingly, the application of the parable is, Matt. xxv. 13. *Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.*

The second parable (see on Luke xix. 12. § 109.) is thus introduced: Matt. xxv. 14. *For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, (οἱ οὗτοι δούλοι, his own slaves) and delivered unto them his goods.* The words, *kingdom of heaven*, are improperly supplied in this verse, for the sentence should run thus: *For he is as a man travelling into a far country*, namely, the Son of man mentioned in the preceding verse. 15. *And unto one he gave five talents, (πεντε ταλάντα) to another two, and to another one, to every man according to his several abilities; that is, according to the prudence, capacity, and activity, which he knew him to be possessed of; and straightway took his journey.* These sums of money being delivered to the slaves, on purpose that they might employ them in the several branches of trade, to which they had been educated, such of them as were honest and industrious, set about business immediately after their lord's departure. 16. *Then he that had received the five talents, went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents.* 17. *And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two.* One of the slaves, however, being lazy and idle, would not put himself to the fatigue of business. At the same time, to avoid chastisement, he took care to preserve his lord's money safe, that he might have it to give him at his return. 18. *But he that had received one, went and digged in the earth, for the greater security, and hid his lord's money.* He neither lost nor embezzled his lord's money, but kept it useless in a hoard. 19. *After a long time the lord of those servants cometh and reckoneth with them.* 20. *And so he that had received five talents, came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents; behold I have gained*



gained besides them five talents more. 21. His lord said unto him, *Well done, thou good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: I will promote thee to a much greater trust. In the mean time, enter thou into the joy of thy lord: share with me in the pleasures of my palace, and by sitting down at the entertainment which I have prepared, rejoice with me on account of my safe return.* Mat. xxv. 22. *He also that had received two talents, came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents; behold I have gained two other talents besides them.* 23. His lord said unto him, *Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.* 24. Then he which had received the one talent, came and said, *Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed:* 25. *And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth; lo, there thou hast that is thine: I knew thee to be a man of a sordid griping disposition, and for that reason I was afraid to risk thy money in trade, lest by some accident or other it might have been lost. This dishonourable notion which the slave entertained of his lord, being a great aggravation of his crime,* 26. *His lord was very angry with him, and answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed. The lord's answer, as it stands in our translation, looks as if it was an acknowledgment of his slave's calumny. But in the original, both here, and Luke xix. 22. it has a quite different aspect. It is an argument drawn from the slave's own words, and therefore ought to have been translated interrogatively, "Thou wicked and slothful servant, didst thou know that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed?"* 27. *Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury (οὐ τόκῳ, with interest).* If thou wast not willing to undergo the trouble and danger of carrying on trade with my money, yet believing me to be of the disposition which thou hast described, thou oughtest by all means to have lent out my money, that I might have received interest at least for it. He mentioned this instance of good management, because it was the lowest that could be, and was attended with the least trouble, to intimate, that though the slave had not pursued with his lord's money that particular sort of trade which, according to the manner of the times, he had been bred to, yet, if he had been at any pains at all to improve the stock committed to him, though it had been ever so little, his lord would have been contented. Matt. xxv. 28. *Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents; see on Luke*



xix. 24. § 109. . 29. *For unto every one that bath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that bath not, shall be taken away even that which he bath; see on Matt. xiii. 12. § 49. 30. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth; see on Matt. viii. 11. § 28.* This his punishment was greatly imbibtered to him by the happier lot of his fellow-servants, who were highly applauded for their diligence, and gladdened with the prospect of their reward.

Thus Jesus described the judgment of his own servants, his apostles, ministers, and all who are in eminent stations of life, shewing, that though they are not blessed indeed with equal advantages, yet that all the gifts, whether of nature or of grace, which they enjoy, are bestowed on them for their Master's service, to whom they properly belong; and that they should be employed in promoting his interests, the interests of truth and righteousness, which he came down to establish on earth; and that he esteems the most useful life to be the most praise-worthy, and will reward it accordingly. The behaviour of a good man in an eminent station of life, is fitly enough compared to a course of merchandize; for as merchants, by laying out their money in trade, receive it again with profit, so the servants of God, by occupying the abilities and opportunities which he has put into their hands, improve, strengthen and increase them; and whatever success they have in this spiritual merchandize, their Master is pleased to consider it as his own, and to think himself enriched thereby, rejoicing infinitely in the happiness of his creatures. The excuse which the slothful slave made for himself, truly expresses the thoughts of wicked men. They look on Christ as a hard tyrannical master, who rigorously exacts what he has no title to, and who punishes with unreasonable severity, things that are no faults at all, or but small ones; and they regard his laws as so many infringements of their liberty, by which they are secluded from much innocent pleasure. But the answer which the judge is said to have returned, demonstrates that all the excuses which wicked men can make for themselves, shall stand for nothing at the great day. And truly it is not to be imagined how any man will produce a sufficient reason before God, justifying his having neglected to do good. The crime and punishment of this idle servant ought to be attentively considered by all, but especially by persons addicted to pleasure, who imagine that there is no harm in giving themselves up to sensual gratifications, provided thereby they do no injury to others. For the Judge of the world here solemnly declares, that one's doing no harm will not bring him off when tried at his bar; that a life spent merely in amusements will be severely punished; that it is highly criminal to let the divine grace lie buried in idleness; and that all God's

servants



servants must be actively good, exerting themselves to the utmost in promoting his interest, which is no other than the happiness of his creatures. By this indeed they acquire no merit, yet it is by this that they are qualified for the enjoyment of heaven, the gates of which Christ has set open by his death. To conclude, if the slave who hid his talent in a napkin, was reckoned unfaithful to his trust, and punished accordingly, notwithstanding he delivered it up to his lord entire, what may they expect who destroy the noble faculties bestowed on them, or use those temporal blessings as occasions of sin, which God intended as means for the exercise and improvement of grace? This parable was delivered formerly in the house of Zaccheus, but with different circumstances, § 109.

The third parable is as follows: Matt. xxv. 31. *When the Son of man shall come in his glory, (see on Matt. xvi. 27. § 71.) and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory.* By this perhaps is meant some shining cloud, like that on which he ascended into heaven, Acts i. 9. For the angels at his ascension declared that he shall come to judgment riding on a cloud, Acts i. 11. See Exod. xvi. 10. 32. *And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:* 33. *And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.* This is agreeable to the language of the Old Testament, in which good men are compared to *sheep* on account of their innocence and usefulness, (Psal. xxiii. 1. c. 3.) and wicked men to *goats*, for the exorbitancy of their lusts, Ezek. xxxiv. 17. The allusion however is dropt almost at the entrance of the parable, the greatest part of this representation being expressed in terms perfectly simple, so that though the sense be profound, it is obvious. Here the judgment of all nations, Gentiles as well as Christians, is described: and the points on which their trials are to proceed, are shewed. They shall be acquitted or condemned, according as it shall then appear that they have performed or neglected works of charity, the duties which in Christians necessarily spring from the great principles of faith and piety, and which the heathens themselves were invited to perform by the light of nature, the dispensation they were under. But then we are not to understand this, as if such works were meritorious in either; for all who are acquitted at that day, whether heathens or Christians, shall be acquitted solely on account of the righteousness of Christ, as the meritorious cause. The sentence passed upon the righteous, affords a noble motive to patience in well-doing. 34. *Then shall the king say unto them on his right hand:* In the beginning of the parable, (ver. 31.) he had called himself the *Son of man* only; but he now changes the appellation, taking the title of *king* with great propriety, when he is speak-  
ing



ing of himself as exercising the highest act of kingly power, in passing final sentence upon all men as his subjects; whereby their state shall be unalterably fixed for ever. But while, in this grand representation, Jesus asserts his proper dignity as Lord over all; he acknowledges his subordination in the kingdom to his Father, by addressing the righteous in the sentence he passes upon them, with the compellation of persons blessed of his Father: *Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.* The present state of good men is at best but a melancholy banishment from their native country. Moreover, they are oftentimes exposed to manifold temptations, to persecutions, to poverty, to reproach, and to innumerable other evils. But that they may bear all with indefatigable patience, and overcome through the strength of an invincible courage; they are made to know by this sentence that they are beloved and blessed of God as his own children; that there is no less than an eternal kingdom prepared for them, even from the foundation of the world; and that they are the undoubted heirs of this eternal kingdom. Well may such bear with the violence of their oppressors, knowing what an exceeding and eternal weight of glory awaits them. They may look on the most flourishing prosperity of the wicked without envy, when they descry the never-fading crown, the fragrancy of the blossoms of which, though it is so distant as heaven, gladdens and refreshes the senses of men on earth. *Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.* How astonishing is it to hear the great Judge declaring, that all the good offices which men have ever performed, were done to him! Matt. xxv. 35. \* *For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat;*  
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\* Matt. 35. *I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat.*] It may seem strange that in this representation of the judgment, the enquiry should be said to turn not upon the commission of crimes, but upon the performance of duties. The reason may be, that, generally speaking, men look upon the neglect of duties as a trivial affair, but dread the commission of crimes. And hence it comes to pass, that while they keep themselves clear of the latter, they are apt to find many excuses for the former. Wherefore, as there is not a more pernicious error respecting religion and morality than this, it was highly becoming the wisdom of Jesus to give such an account of the judgment, as should be the most solemn caution possible against it.

But since the enquiry is said to turn wholly upon the performance of duties, it may seem more strange still, that the offices of charity only are mentioned, and not a word spoken of any search made into mens conduct with regard to the duties of piety; notwithstanding the Judge himself, upon another occasion, declared such to be of greater importance than the duties of charity, that are so highly applauded in the parable. See § 119. Nevertheless, to justify this part of the representation, let it be considered that piety and charity never can subsist separately; piety, and its root, faith, always producing charity; and charity, wherever it subsists, necessarily



*I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink ; I was a stranger, and ye took me in ; 36. Naked, and ye clothed me ; I was sick, and ye visited me ; I was in prison, and ye came unto me. In the whole of*

rily pre-supposing piety. The connection between piety and charity will clearly appear, provided this dictate of reason and experience is attended to, namely, that no man can be truly benevolent and merciful, without loving those dispositions. It so, he must love benevolence in God, that is, must love God himself. I speak of those who believe there is a God; for piety, or the love of God, is nothing else but the regard we cherish towards God on account of his perfections. Piety and charity being thus essentially connected together, to examine mens conduct with respect to either of these graces was sufficient. In the parable, the inquiry is represented as turning upon the duties of charity, perhaps because in this branch of goodness there is less room for self-deceit than in the other. Hypocrites, by shewing much zeal in the externals of religion, oftentimes make specious pretensions to extraordinary piety, and uncommon heights of the love of God, while in the mean time they are altogether defective in charity; are covetous, unjust, rapacious and proud, consequently really void of the love of God. The case is otherwise with the love of man. None can assume the appearance of this grace, but by feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, relieving the distressed, and performing the other friendly offices of love. Charity therefore does not easily admit of self-deceit. It is true, works of charity may, in some particular cases, proceed from other principles than the holy root of a pious benevolent disposition; such as from vanity, or even from views of interest. But then it must be remembered, that an ordinary hypocrisy will hardly engage men to undertake them. They are by far too weighty duties to be sustained by those hollow false principles which support bad men, and by that means are seldom counterfeited. For which cause, wherever a genuine, extensive, and permanent charity is found, we may safely conclude that there the love of God reigns in perfection.

This parable therefore teaches us in the plainest manner, that pretensions to piety, however loud, will avail a man nothing at the bar of God, if he be deficient in works of charity. At the same time, taken in its true light, it gives no man reason to hope well either of himself or others, if they be wanting in their duty to God, and that although they should not only be charitable, but grateful also, and just, and temperate, and outwardly blameless in all their dealings with men. The reason is this, the duty we owe to God is no other than what is due to men in the like circumstances, and which if we neglected we should be unjust to them. It consists of dispositions and actions the same in kind, but different in degree, proportionable to the perfection of the object. He who loves and admires holiness, justice, goodness and truth in men, cannot but love these perfections in God, that is, must love God. So likewise he that is truly grateful to an earthly benefactor, cannot be ungrateful to one, from whose bounty all the good things he enjoys do flow. And since ingratitude in men consisteth in this, that the person obliged forgetteth the benefit he has received, never thinks of his benefactor, and is at no pains to make suitable returns; how can he acquit himself from the charge of ingratitude to God, who never thinks of God, nor of the favours that he hath received from him, hath no sense of the obligations he lieth under to him, and is not at the pains so much as to return him thanks, that is to say, wholly neglects the external and internal exercises of devotion. Since therefore the duty we owe to God is the same in kind with that which men claim from us in like circumstances; it is unquestionable, that true morality never



of your conduct you have imitated the goodness and benevolence of my Father, and therefore I now declare you blessed and beloved of him, and appoint you to inherit this kingdom. Moreover, that you may know how acceptable acts of kindness and charity are to me, I assure you, that I reckon every thing of this kind as done to myself. It was I who was an hungered, and athirst, and a stranger, and naked, and sick, and in prison. It was I whom you clothed, and lodged, and visited, and comforted in prison. The righteous, in great surprize, ask, with reverence and humility, when all this happened? since they never had seen him in want of their assistance, nor could remember that they had ever bestowed aught upon him. Matt. xxv. 37. *Then shall the righteous answer, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? 38. When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? 39. Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? 40. And the King shall answer and say unto them, the King of angels and men, Verily I say unto you, in as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto*

can exist, where there is no piety; and that for one to pretend to morality, who is destitute of piety, is altogether ridiculous.

But if this parable gives persons no encouragement who are destitute of piety, although they should make a fair shew of many moral virtues, it much less gives those any ground of hope, who not only are void of piety, but are faulty almost in every respect, unless it be that they have a lovely kind of tenderness and humanity in their disposition, which leads them on some occasions to do excellent acts of beneficence. For though there be nothing said of any enquiry made concerning the duties of justice, temperance, chastity and fidelity, we are by no means on that account to fancy these virtues shall not be enquired after at the judgment, and rewarded wherever they are found. Or, that the contrary vices of falsehood, and fraud, and debauchery, shall not be taken notice of, and punished. Charity being the end of the commandment, so far as it respects our duty to men, is the higher branch, and therefore has for its supports justice, veracity, and the other social virtues. Moreover, being connected with temperance, chastity, and self-government, it can never be without these attendant graces, the neglect of which is evidently a direct and gross breach of charity, or leadeth thereto. In a word, as among the vices, so among the virtues, there is a natural affinity and close connection. They are some how absolutely essential and necessary to each other, and so can in no case subsist separately. For which reason, if any of them be wanting, much more if so capital a virtue as the love of God be wanting, it is a sure proof that our charity, our justice, our temperance, or whatever other grace we seem to have, is but the mimicry of these virtues, and not the virtues themselves. At the same time it cannot be denied, that the parable is formed so as to give us the highest idea of works of charity; they are demanded at the judgment as the fruit and perfection of all the virtues, and loudly applauded wherever they are found. On the other hand, hard-heartedness, cruelty, and uncharitableness, are branded with the blackest mark of infamy, being the foundation on which the sentence of condemnation passed against the wicked, is unalterably and eternally fixed.



*unto me.* This is unspeakably astonishing! The united wisdom of men and angels could not have thought of any thing more proper to convey an idea of the warmth and strength of the divine benevolence to men, or offer a more constraining motive to charity, than that the Son of God should declare from the judgment-seat, in presence of the whole universe assembled, that such good offices as are done to the afflicted, are done to him. Having in the days of his flesh, suffered injuries and afflictions unspeakable, he considers all the virtuous distressed as members of his body, loves them tenderly, and is so much interested in their welfare, that when they are happy he rejoices, when they are distressed he is grieved: *In as much as ye have done it to one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.* O wonderful condescension of the Son of God! O astonishing stupidity of men, who neglect altogether, or are persuaded with difficulty, to do good to Christ! That Jesus should call the poor, even among the heathen, his brethren, is a great honour to the human nature, and shews the divine benignity in an amiable light. This happy relation arises from the manhood which he still possesses in common with men, and from the poverty, affliction, and other miseries of men, that he was exposed to while he lived in the world. He may call good men, whether heathens or Christians, his brethren likewise, because they are children of the same father, viz. God, after whose image they are formed by the influences of his Spirit working faith in them, that is, a firm and solid conviction of the truths of religion, as far as it has pleased him to discover them. It is this conformity of natures, human and divine, which makes men Christ's brethren; for which reason, in whatever person it is found, he will acknowledge the relation, without regard to any circumstance whatever that is out of the person's power. Matt. xxv. 41. *Then shall he say unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, of my Father, as is evident from ver. 34. into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.* 42. *For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink;* 43. *I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.* 44. *Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?* 45. *Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, in as much as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.* In this parable, the absolution of the righteous is represented as happening before the condemnation of the wicked, to shew that God takes greater delight in rewarding than in punishing men. Moreover, it is remarkable that the fire of hell is here said to be prepared, not for the wicked, but for the devil and his angels; whereas the kingdom of heaven is said



to be prepared expressly for the righteous. Perhaps our Lord by this intended to teach us, that God's original intention was to make men happy, and not to damn them. No sooner were we created, than a state of consummate felicity was formed for us. But the fire of hell was prepared for the devil and his angels, namely, after their fall. And because wicked men partake with devils in their sin of rebellion against God, they are doomed to share with them in their punishment. Perhaps also the fire of hell is declared to be made for the devil and his angels, to intimate the greatness of the misery to which men irreclaimably wicked shall be consigned. The punishment which they shall suffer is of the heaviest kind, being the punishment of devils. The condemnation of the wicked, for having neglected to take pity on Christ's brethren, does not imply that he would have our works of charity confined to good men, or that he does not disapprove of inhumanity and cruelty toward those who are bad. The circumstance is formed only to shew more effectually the niggardly, merciless, selfish disposition of the wicked. For if a person be hard-hearted to a saint, he must be more so to a sinner, who, as his covetousness will immediately suggest, deserves nothing; so that it was needless to mention their cruelty to such. To conclude, the issue of the judgment, as it is represented in this parable, is awful beyond description. *Matt. xxv. 46. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal.* If the meaning of this short sentence was fully understood, what an impression would it make upon sinners! *Everlasting punishment! Eternal life!* what is there that is not comprehended in these?

§ CXXV. *Jesus foretels his own sufferings the seventh time; see § 106. 127. He is anointed the third time; see § 110. Judas bargains with the council to betray his Master to them. Matt. xxvi. 1,—16. Mark xiv. 1,—11. Luke xxi. 37, 38. xxii. 1,—6.*

LUKE xxi. 37. *And in the day-time he was teaching in the temple, and at night he went out and abode in the mount that is called the mount of Olives.* His custom at this, and, it may be, at other passovers, was to spend the day in the city, most commonly in the temple, where he always found a great concourse of hearers, and in the evening to retire to the mount of Olives, where he lodged in the villages, or in the gardens, or in the open air among the trees. He chose to lodge at night in such places as these, that he might avoid falling into the hands of his enemies. For though they durst not attack him in the midst of his followers by day, they probably would have apprehended him during the silence and darkness of the night, had he lodged any where within the walls of the town. Accordingly, they did not



venture to lay hands on him, till Judas Iscariot, one of his own disciples, betrayed him to them, in the absence of the multitude, by conducting an armed band to the place of his retirement. 38. *And all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple for to hear him.* The evangelist does not say that the people came and heard Jesus preach in the temple after this, for Jesus himself had declared that he never was to preach to them any more, Matt. xxiii. 38, 39. But having described in what manner our Lord spent his time at this passover, the evangelist adds, that his ministry sustained no damage by his leaving the city at night, because he did not fail to return every morning to the temple, before any considerable number of people could attend him; and because they came early, knowing that it was his custom to be there betimes.

Matt. xxvi. 1. *And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples, 2. Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.* When our Lord sat down on the mount of Olives, to foretel the destruction of the city, and to deliver the parables which represent the method of the general judgment, he was so far on his way to Bethany. After the parables were pronounced, and before he departed, he thought fit to add a word or two concerning his own death. The greatest trial that his disciples were ever to meet with, was now approaching in their Master's sufferings. Wherefore, to prepare them, he foretold those sufferings, together with the particular time and manner of them; and by so doing, proved that he knew perfectly whatever was to befall him, and that his sufferings were all voluntary and necessary \*. *Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes,*  
and

\* This being the last day of our Lord's public teaching, it was more full of action than any other mentioned in the history, as will appear from the following induction of particulars.

He came to Bethany six days before the passover, probably about sun setting. He rode into the city, surrounded by the multitude, the next afternoon. For when he had looked round on all things in the temple after his entry, it was evening, Mark xi. 11. this happened five days before the passover. He went in again from Bethany the day following, viz. four days before the passover, and by the way blasted the fig-tree; after that, he drove the buyers and sellers out of the temple. Next morning, viz. three days before the passover, and the last of his public teaching, being on his way to town, he spake concerning the efficacy of faith, on occasion of the disciples expressing great astonishment at seeing the fig-tree that was cursed the day before withered from the roots. When he appeared in the temple, the deputies that were sent by the council came and asked him concerning his authority. He answered them with a question concerning the baptism of John; then spake the parable of the two sons commanded to work in their father's vineyard; after that the parable of the vineyard let out to husbandmen; also the parable of the marriage-supper. Then he avoided the snare that was laid for him in the question concerning



*and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, 4. And consulted, that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill him. 5. But they said, Not on the feast-day, (scen, the feast, i. e. the whole time of the solemnity, which lasted seven days) lest there should be an uproar among the people. See the beginning of § 111.*

When Jesus and his disciples came to Bethany, they took up their lodging with Simon the leper, probably one of those who had experienced the healing efficacy of his power. During the time of supper, a woman came and poured a box of precious ointment on the Lord's head. Mat. xxvi. 6. *Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, 7. There came unto him a woman having an alabaster-box of very precious ointment, (Mark, of spikenard very precious, and she brake the box) and poured it on his head as he sat at meat.* The disciples being sensible that their Master was not delighted with luxuries of any kind, rebuked her for throwing away so much money idly as they imagined. But they expressed themselves so as to cast a tacit reflection on Jesus himself. Mark xiv. 4. *And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, (Mark, But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation within themselves, saying, To what purpose) Why was this waste of the ointment made? 5. For it (Matt. this ointment) might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, (Matt. for much) and have been given to the poor.* They did not say the money wherewith this ointment was purchased might have been given to the poor, but this ointment might have been sold and given; insinuating that Jesus was to blame for not taking the ointment from the woman and selling it; *and they murmured against her, they spake privately among themselves against the woman for what she had done.* But Jesus knowing every thing they said, told them, God had so ordered matters, that, for the exercise and improvement of virtue, there should always be poor in the land, to whom they

concerning the tribute-money; confuted the doctrine of the Sadducees, concerning the resurrection; shewed the scribe which was the great commandment in the law; asked the Pharisees whose son Christ is; cautioned his disciples to beware of the Scribes and Pharisees, against whom he denounced many grievous woes. When the woes were finished, he looked on the people throwing their gifts into the treasury, probably as they worshipped at the evening sacrifice, and commended the poor widow for her charity. After the service was over, he left the temple, and went to the mount of Olives, where he foretold the downfall of the nation, and spake three parables representing the procedure at the general judgment. Last of all, he concluded the work of the day with predicting his own sufferings. By this time it must have been about sun setting. He went away therefore with his disciples to Bethany, intending to pass the night there, at a distance from his enemies, the chief priests and the scribes, who were now gathered together at the high priest's palace, to deliberate how they might take him and put him to death.



they might do good offices at any time ; but that if their love was not testified to him at that juncture, they would have no opportunity to shew it afterwards, because he was to die within two days, for which reason, the woman had come very seasonably to anoint him in order to his burial. Matt. xxvi. 10. *When Jesus understood it, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me.* 11. *For ye have the poor always with you, (Mark, and whensoever ye will, ye may do them good) but me ye have not always, (Mark, she hath done what she could; she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying).* 12. *For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial:* Προς το μεταφύνασθαι μου, *corpus meum ad funus componere; ornamentis sepulchralibus ornare,* as Casaubon explains it. This vindication of the woman suggests the reason why Jesus permitted so expensive a compliment to be paid to him twice in the space of one week. Being desirous to impress his disciples with the thought of his death, he embraced every opportunity of inculcating it, whether by word or deed. Farther to make them sensible of their folly in blaming the woman for this expression of her love to him, he assured them, that however much she might be condemned by them, she should be highly celebrated for this action through the world, and live in the memory of all ages; it being the peculiar right of eminent virtue, that it draws the admiration of men in the most distant countries and times. 13. *Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this that this woman hath done, be told (Mark, be spoken of) for a memorial of her.*

Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, having been more forward than the rest in condemning the woman, thought himself peculiarly affronted by the rebuke which Jesus now gave to all his apostles. Rising up therefore, he went straightway into the city, to the high priest's palace, where he found the whole council seasonably assembled; and being in a passion, he promised, for the reward of thirty silver shekels, to put his Master into their hands. Luke xxii. 3. *Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.* 4. *And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests, \* and captains, how he might betray*

\* Luke 4. *And captains.*] The captains with whom Judas communed, are here and elsewhere called *the captains of the temple*, Luke xxii. 52. and are joined with the priests as their companions; a circumstance which proves that they were Jews and not heathens. See Acts iv. 1. From David's time the priests and Levites kept watch, first in the tabernacle, and then in the temple, night and day, as appears from 2 Chron. viii. 14. The guards of priests were stationed at three places, but those of the Levites at one and twenty. The Levites, while they performed this office according to their courses under the first temple, were called *porters*, 2 Chron. viii.



tray him unto them, Matt. xxvi. 15. *And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you?* The result of their communing is not mentioned, only by the sequel it appears, that Judas informed the priests of the place where his Master used to spend the nights, and undertook to conduct a band of armed men thither, who in the absence of the multitude might easily take him. And because none of them were so well acquainted with Jesus, as to be able to distinguish him from his disciples in the darkness of the night, he agreed to point him out to them by kissing him. Luke xxii. 5. *And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money* (Matt. *they covenanted with him for \* thirty pieces of silver*). 6. *And he promised, and* (Matt. *from that time he*) *sought opportunity* (Mark, *conveniently*) *to betray him unto them,* (παράδωκεν αὐτὸν αὐτοῖς, *to deliver him up to them*: thus the words καὶ ὑμῖν παραδώσω αὐτὸν, are translated, Matt. xxvi. 15. *and I will deliver him unto you*) *in the absence of the multitude* †.

viii. 14. and each of the watches had a chief or captain, ἑκατὼν, and over them all was one, called by way of eminence ἀρχηγός, the *chief leader*, or *captain*. That these names of military men should have been given to the priests and Levites, who were no soldiers, neither had soldiers under them, will not seem strange, when it is remembered that the attendance of the Levites is called *the warfare of the service*, Num. viii. 24, 25. and that they performed all the offices of soldiers in garrisons; they kept guard at the gates of the temple, preserved the peace within its precincts, and brought such as were disorderly before the high priest and council.

But, besides the Levite porters, there was another guard belonging to the temple, namely, the Roman garrison in the tower or castle Antonia, which was built hard by the temple. Of this castle and garrison there is mention made Acts xxi. 31. 32. 34. Matthew calls a detachment from it, appointed to guard our Lord's sepulchre, κρυαία, which was the proper Latin name of such a body of Roman soldiers. But it was not with the captains of the garrison Antonia, that Judas bargained to deliver up his Master, neither were they the persons Jesus spake to when he addressed them who came to apprehend him, Luke xxii. 52. In both passages these captains are called ἑκατὼν, whereas the captains of the garrison are termed by Josephus φερεαρχοί, and by Luke, Acts xxi. and xxii. χιλιάρχαι. Besides, no heathens were ever admitted into the supreme ecclesiastical court of the Jews. Not to mention that the latter shunned the company of the former as much as possible. It is plain therefore that the persons with whom Judas communed, and who are here called the *captains* and *captains of the temple*, were the priests who commanded the temple guard, and who were at the devotion of the high priest and council, to execute whatever orders they thought fit to give them.

\* *Thirty pieces of silver.* Τριακοντα ἀρσύρια. The ἀρσύριον is commonly supposed to have been the Jewish *shekel*, which, properly speaking, was the denomination of a weight equal to twenty *gerabs*, (Exod. xxx. 13.) each weighing sixteen barley-corns. The shekel therefore was equal to the weight of three hundred and twenty barley-corns, or half a Roman ounce, consequently in silver was equivalent to two shillings, threepence, one farthing and a half, Sterling.

† The treachery of Judas Iscariot, in betraying his Master, must raise the



the astonishment of every reader who has any just notion of our Lord's character. Wherefore, the motives swaying him to be guilty of such an atrocious crime, and the circumstances which attended it, deserve a particular consideration.

Some are of opinion that he was pushed to commit this villany, by his resentment of the rebuke which Jesus gave him, for blaming the woman who came with the precious ointment. But though this may have had its weight with him, I think it could not be the only motive; because the rebuke was not levelled against him singly, but was directed also to the rest, who had been equally forward with him in censuring the woman, and who being rebuked at the same time, must have kept him in countenance. Besides, though he had been rebuked alone, it can hardly be supposed that so mild a reproof would provoke any person, how wicked soever, to the horrid act of murdering his friend; much less Judas, whose covetousness must have disposed him to bear every thing at the hand of his Master, from whom he expected great preferment. If it is replied, that his resentment was so great as to hinder him from exercising his reason, and hurried him on precipitantly, it should be considered, that though he struck the bargain with the priests a few hours after he was rebuked, almost two days passed before he fulfilled his bargain. Besides, to impute his treachery to the sudden impulses of a strong resentment, is such an alleviation of his crime as seems inconsistent with the character given of it in scripture, where it is always represented in the blackest colours, and said to merit the heaviest punishment.

Others think that Judas betrayed his Master out of covetousness. But neither can this be admitted, if by covetousness is understood an eager desire of the reward given him by the priests. For the whole sum was not in value above three pounds, ten shillings, Sterling, a trifle which the most covetous wretch cannot be supposed to have taken as an equivalent for the life of a friend, from whom he had the greatest expectations of gain. The reader will see the strength of this reason, when he calls to mind that all the disciples believed the kingdom was instantly to be erected, and that, according to the notion which they entertained of it, each of them, but especially the apostles, had the prospect of being raised in a little time to immense riches. Besides, the scripture tells us, that Judas' predominant passion was covetousness. He would not therefore be so inconsistent with himself, as when just on the point of reaping such a reward of his service, to throw all away for the trifling sum above mentioned.

Others attribute Judas' perfidy to his doubting whether his Master was the Messiah, and suppose that he betrayed him in a fit of despair. But of all the solutions, this is the worst founded. For if Judas thought his Master was an impostor, he must have observed something in his behaviour, which led him to form such an opinion of him, and in that case he certainly would have mentioned it to the chief priests and elders, at the time he made the bargain with them, which it is plain he did not, otherwise they would have put him in mind of it, when he came to them, and declared his remorse for what he had done. Doubtless also they would have urged it against our Lord himself in the course of his trials, when they were at such a loss for witnesses to prove their accusations; and against the apostles afterwards, when they reproved them for preaching in Christ's name, Acts iv. 15. v. 27. Farther, had Judas thought his Master an impostor, and proposed nothing by his treachery but the price he put upon his life, how came he to sell him for such a trifle, when he well knew that the priests would have given him any sum, rather than not have gotten him into their hands? To conclude, the supposition of Judas' believing that his Master was an impostor, is directly confuted by the solemn declaration



declaration which he made to the priests, implying the deepest conviction of Christ's innocence: "I have sinned (said he) in betraying the innocent blood." It is also confuted by the remorse which he felt for his crime when Jesus was condemned; a remorse so bitter, that he was not able to bear it, but fled to a halter for relief.

Since Judas' treachery proceeded from none of the motives mentioned, it may be asked what other motive can be assigned for his conduct? The evangelist John tells us, that he was so covetous as to steal money out of our Lord's bag. This account of him gives us reason to believe, that he first followed Jesus with a view to the riches and other temporal advantages which he expected the Messiah's friends would enjoy. Likewise it authorizes us to think, that as he had hitherto reaped none of those advantages, he might grow impatient under the delay; and the more so, that Jesus had of late discouraged all ambitious views among his disciples, and neglected to embrace the opportunity of erecting his kingdom, that was offered by the multitude, who accompanied him into Jerusalem with hosannas. His impatience therefore becoming excessive, put him upon the scheme of delivering his Master into the hands of the council, thinking it the most proper method of obliging him to assume the dignity of Messiah, and consequently of enabling him to reward his followers. For as this court was composed of the chief priests, elders, and scribes, that is, the principal persons belonging to the sacerdotal order, the representatives of the great families, and the doctors of the law, Judas did not doubt but that Jesus, when before such an assembly, would prove his pretensions to their full conviction, gain them over to his interests, and enter forthwith on his regal dignity. And though he could not but be sensible that the measure which he took to bring this about, was very offensive to his Master, he might think that the success of it would procure his pardon, and even recommend him to favour. In the mean time, his project, however plausible it might appear to one of his turn, was far from being free from difficulty. And therefore while he revolved it in his own mind, many things might occur to stagger his resolution. At length something happened which urged him on. Thinking himself affronted by the rebuke which Jesus had given him in the matter of the last anointing, and that rebuke sitting the heavier on him, as he had procured a former mark of his Master's displeasure by an imprudence of the same kind, he was provoked. And though his resentment was not such as could inspire him with the horrid design of murdering his Master, it impelled him to execute the resolution he had formed of making him alter his measures. Rising up therefore from table, he went straightway into the city to the high priest's palace, where he found the chief priests and elders assembled, consulting how they might take Jesus by subtilty. See § 110. To them he made known his intention, and undertook, for a small sum of money, to conduct a band of armed men to the place where Jesus usually spent the nights, and where they might apprehend him without the danger of a tumult. Thus the devil laying hold on the various passions which now agitated the traitor's breast, tempted him by them all. See on John xiii. 26. § 128.

That these were the views with which Judas acted in betraying his Master, may be gathered, 1. From the nature of the bargain which he struck with the priests. "What will ye give me (said he) and I will deliver him unto you?" He did not mean that he would deliver him up to be put to death. For though the priests had consulted among themselves how they might kill Jesus, none of them had been so barefaced as to declare their intention publicly. They only proposed to bring him to a trial for having assumed the character of the Messiah, and to treat him as it should appear he deserved. The offer therefore which Jesus made to them of delivering him up, was in conformity to their public resolution. Nor

did



did they understand it in any other light. For had the priests thought that his design in this was to get Jesus punished with death, they must likewise have thought that he believed him to be an impostor; in which case, they certainly would have produced him as one of their principal evidences, no person being more fit to bear witness against any criminal than his companion. Or though Judas had repented before the trial came on, and had withdrawn himself, the priests might have argued with great plausibility, both in their own court, and before the governor, that for a man's disciple to require the judges to bring him to condign punishment, branded him with such a suspicion of guilt, as was almost equal to a full proof. Likewise when Judas returned to them with the money, declaring that he had sinned in betraying the innocent blood, instead of replying, "What is that to us? see thou to that," it was the most natural thing in the world to have upbraided him with the stain he had put upon his Master's character, by the bargain he had entered into with them. It is true they called the money they gave him "the price of blood," *Matt. xxvii. 6.* But they did not mean this in the strictest sense, as they neither had hired Judas to assassinate his Master, nor can be supposed to have charged themselves with the guilt of murdering him. It was only the price of blood consequentially, being the reward they had given to the traitor, for putting it in their power to take away Christ's life, under the colour and form of public justice. Nay, it may be even doubted whether Judas asked the money as a reward of his service. He covetously indeed kept it, and the priests for that reason called it the price of blood. But he demanded it perhaps on pretence of gratifying and encouraging the people that were to assist him in apprehending Jesus. To conclude, Judas knew that the rulers could not take away the life of any person whatsoever, the Romans having deprived them of that power, (*John xviii. 31.*) and therefore could have no design of this kind in delivering him up; not to mention that it was a common opinion among the Jews, that Messiah would never die, (*John xii. 34.*) an opinion which Judas might easily embrace, having seen his Master raise several persons from the dead, and among the rest one who had been in the grave no less than four days.

2. That the traitor's intention in betraying his Master was what I have said, is probable from his hanging himself, when he found him condemned, not by the governor, but by the council, whose prerogative it was to judge prophets. Had Judas proposed to take away his Master's life, the sentence of condemnation passed upon him, instead of filling him with despair, must have gratified him, being the accomplishment of his project; whereas the light wherein I have endeavoured to place his conduct, shews this circumstance to have been perfectly natural. Judas having been witness to the greatest part of our Lord's miracles, and having experienced the certain truth of them, in the powers that had been conferred upon himself, could never think that the council would have condemned him as a false Christ, far less as a blasphemer. He knew him to be perfectly innocent, and expected that he would have wrought such miracles before the council, as should have constrained them to believe. Therefore, when he found that nothing of this kind was done, and that the priests had passed the sentence of condemnation upon him, and were carrying him to the governor to get it executed, he repented of his rash and covetous project, came to the chief priests and elders, the persons to whom he had betrayed him, offered them their money again, and solemnly declared the deepest conviction of his Master's innocence, hoping that they would have desisted from the prosecution. But they were obstinate, and would not relent; upon which, his remorse arole to such a pitch, that, unable to support the torments of his conscience, he went and hanged himself. Thus, I think it probable, that the traitor's intention in delivering up his Master, was to lay him under a necessity of proving his pretensions before the grandees, whom



whom he had hitherto shunned, thinking that if they had yielded, the whole nation would immediately have submitted, and the disciples have been raised forthwith to the summit of their expectations.

This account of Judas' conduct is by no means calculated to lessen the foulness of his crime, which was the blackest imaginable. For even in the light above mentioned, it implied both an insatiable avarice, and a wilful opposition to the counsels of Providence; and so rendered the actor of it a disgrace to human nature. But it is calculated to set the credibility of the traitor's action in a proper light, and to shew that he was not moved to it by any thing suspicious in the character of his Master; because, according to this view of it, his perfidy, instead of implying that he entertained suspicions of his Master's integrity, plainly proves that he had the fullest conviction of his being the Messiah. And, to say the truth, it was not possible for any one intimately acquainted with our Lord as Judas was, to judge otherwise of him, having seen his miracles, which were great and true beyond exception, and having experienced his power in the ability of working miracles, which, along with the rest of the apostles, he had received from him, and no doubt exercised with extraordinary pleasure. However, as the motives of mens actions, at such a distance of time, must needs be intricate, especially where history is in a great measure silent concerning them, we ought to be very modest in our attempts to unravel them. For which cause, the above account of Judas' conduct is proposed only as a conjecture worthy of farther inquiry.

§ CXXVI. *Peter and John are sent to prepare the passover.*  
Matt. xxvi. 17,—19. Mark xiv. 12,---16. Luke xxii. 7,--13.

OUR Lord intending to celebrate the passover with his disciples once more before he died, sent Peter and John from Bethany to make it ready. Luke xxii. 7. *Then came \* the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed.* See Chronological Dissertation, vi. 8. *And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover. Go buy a lamb for us, and get it killed and roasted, and make the other preparations, that we may eat.* Matt. xxvi. 17. *Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, (Mark, when they killed the passover) the disciples, Peter and John, whom he had ordered to prepare the passover, came to Jesus, saying unto him, in answer to his command, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?* Mark xiv. 13. *And he sendeth forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, go ye into the city.* Matt. xxvi. 18. *To such a man.* This implies that Jesus named the person to whom they were sent, though the evangelists have not thought it of importance to mention

\* Luke 7. *The day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed.* They called the day on which the passover was killed, one of the days of unleavened bread, and the first day thereof, because it was preparatory to that feast; though, properly speaking, the first day began with the passover supper. This appears likewise from Josephus, who, making use of the vulgar computation, tells us, that the feast of unleavened bread lasted eight days; whereas, in the law, it is ordered to be kept only seven days. Exod. xii. 19. "Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses." See Chron. Dissert. vi.



mention his name. He told them farther that on their entrance into the city they should find one of the man's servants in the street bearing a pitcher of water. This servant he ordered them to follow, without saying any thing to him, because as he was carrying the water home, he would lead them straight to his master's house, which it seems the disciples were not acquainted with. For that the person bearing the water, whom they were to meet in the street, was not the master of the house, is plain from Mark xiv. 14. Luke xxii. 10. *And he said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in.* If our Lord meant that the man should be coming out of the city as his disciples were going in, his order implied that they were to turn back with him, the house whither he was carrying the water, being somewhere in the suburbs; but if he meant that the man would meet them at the crossing of a street, or the turning of a corner, they were to go with him perhaps farther into the city. The word made use of by Luke seems to favour this supposition, *συνανθρου υμιν*. Mark xiv. 14. *And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the good man of the house, The Master saith (Luke, unto thee).* Matt. xxvi. 18. *My time is at hand, my time of eating the passover; or, as others interpret it, the time of my sufferings and death is at hand: I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples, Luke xxii. 11. Where is the guest-chamber where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?* Commentators on this passage tell us from the Talmudists, that in Jerusalem, at the passover, the houses were not to be let, but were of common right for any one to eat the passover in them. Luke xxii. 12. *And he shall shew you a large upper room furnished (εξοπλισμενον, stratum, Mark, and prepared) that is, spread with a carpet, and having beds placed to lie upon; for the easterns did not sit at table as we do, but lay on beds called triclinia, because they commonly contained three persons. There make ready the passover (Mark, for us).* Jesus gave his disciples these directions, either because they were not acquainted with the master of the house, or did not know what part of the city he lived in. However, the principal reason was, to shew them how completely he foreknew every thing that should befall him, and to convince them that his sufferings were all predetermined of God; and that on his own part they were all submitted unto voluntarily. Matt. xxvi. 19. *And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them.* Luke xxii. 13. *And they went and found as he had said unto them. (Mark, his disciples went forth, and came into the city and found as he had said unto them) and they made ready the passover.* On their entrance into the city they met the man bearing a pitcher of water of whom Jesus spake, they followed him home, and upon delivering their Master's



fter's message to the good man of the house, he shewed them an upper chamber, into which they entered, and immediately began to make ready the passover.

### FIFTH PASSOVER.

{ CXXVII. *Jesus washes his disciples feet at the passover-supper, and speaks of his sufferings the eighth time.* See § 125. 129. Matth. xxvi. 20. Mark xiv. 17. Luke xxii. 14,---18. John xiii. 1,---20.

WHEN the evening approached, Jesus left Bethany; and every thing being prepared by the time he came into the city, they all sat down at the appointed hour. Mark xiv. 17. *And in the evening he cometh with the twelve.* Luke xxii. 14. *And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him.* The observation with which John ushers in this part of his history, may be considered as a kind of preface to the five subsequent chapters of his gospel. John xiii. 1. *Now before the feast of the passover, that is, before they began the passover-supper, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world, unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end, viz. of his life.* Knowing that his sufferings were at hand, the prospect of them did not make him forget his disciples. They rather quickened his friendship; for he indulged the tenderest feelings of love on this occasion, and after the manner of a departing friend, expressed his kindness in the most affectionate manner. I have longed greatly, said he, to eat this passover with you before I suffer, because it is the last I shall ever celebrate with you, and because I desire before my death, to give you the strongest proofs of my love. The proofs he had in view were his setting them a pattern of humility and charity, by washing their feet; his instructing them in the nature of his death, as a propitiatory sacrifice; his instituting the sacrament of the supper in commemoration of his sufferings; his comforting them by the tender discourses, recorded John; chapters xiv. xv. xvi. in which he gave them a variety of excellent advices, and many gracious promises; last of all, his recommending them solemnly by prayer to the kind protection and direction of his Father. Luke xxii. 15. *And he said unto them, With desire I have desired, i. e. I have greatly desired, to eat this passover with you before I suffer.* 16. *For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, \* until it be fulfilled in the kingdom*

\* Luke 16. *Until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God* ] The particle *until* used here and in ver. 18. does not imply that after the accomplishment of the salvation of men, our Lord was to eat the passover. It is an Hebrew form of expression, signifying that the thing mentioned was no more to be done for ever.



*kingdom of heaven*, i. e. until the deliverance of mankind from the bondage of sin is accomplished in the gospel-dispensation; a deliverance typified by that of our fathers from the Egyptian bondage, to keep up the memory of which the passover was instituted. Having thus spoken, Jesus took a cup of wine in his hand, and gave thanks to Almighty God for his great goodness to men, mentioning no doubt some of the principal instances thereof; then began the solemnity as usual, by drinking to his family. Luke xxii. 17. *And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves.* 18. *For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come*, i. e. till the gospel-dispensation shall begin. This remark is made to shew his disciples how near at hand the kingdom of God was. See Mark xiv. 25. John xiii. 2. *And \*supper being come* (so *δύπνον γενομένης* should be translated;

\* John 2. *And supper being come.*] That this was the passover supper, and consequently that the interpretation given of the first verse above, is just, may be proved by four arguments:

1. In John's history of this supper we are told, when Jesus washed the disciples feet, he sat down again to table, and explained the meaning of the action, ver. 12. Then declared that one of them should betray him, ver. 18,—21. This occasioned the beloved disciple first, and after him all the disciples, to inquire which of them should do the horrid deed, ver 23. But by the consent of all the evangelists, that declaration and inquiry was first made while they were eating the last passover.

2. At the supper mentioned by John, Jesus declared that Peter should deny him, John xiii. 38. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, the cock shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice." Now all the evangelists agree, that Peter denied his Master the night in which he celebrated the last passover. Wherefore seeing the words of the declaration are not, "The cock shall not crow the next, the third, or the fourth day," but "the cock shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice," the declaration must have been made on the night of the denial, consequently the supper at which it was made, must have been the paschal supper.

3. The connection in which John's supper stands with the subsequent facts mentioned by him, shews plainly that it was the paschal supper. For the discourse, John xiv. being intended to give the disciples consolation, was delivered immediately after Peter's denial and the cowardice of the rest were foretold. Having ended that discourse Jesus went out of the house, John xiv. 31. and delivered the allegorical sermon, John xv. which from the subject of it, seems to have been preached in a place where there were many vines growing:—probably on the mount of Olives, whither, as the other evangelists inform us, he retired after the paschal supper. For it was customary with our Lord to preach from the sensible objects that were nearest at hand. Immediately after the allegorical sermon, he spake that which is contained in the xvth and xviith chapters of John, then went with his disciples over the brook Cedron into the garden of Gethsemane, where he was apprehended. From this series of facts it appears, that the supper, John xiii. 2. was the paschal supper, because between it and Jesus' crucifixion, there is not the least chasm in John's history, where the passover can be brought in.

4. We are told, John xiii. 27,—30. that after Jesus had ordered Judas to



ted; or in time of supper, as is plain from verses 4. and 26. compared) (*the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him*). John xiii. 3. *Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God.* By the knowledge he possessed of mens hearts, and particularly of what was passing in the heart of Judas, who was contriving how to betray him, as well as by the other evidences of his mission, he was sensible that the Father had put all power into his hands for the salvation of men, and was assured that he had come from God, and went to God. Nevertheless, though he was thus sensible of his own high dignity, and though one of his disciples was a monster of ingratitude, he performed to them all, without distinction, an office of a servile kind, for their instruction, which will obtain the applause of endless ages. Determined to teach his disciples and mankind the lovely virtue of humility by his own example, he arose from table; he, their Master, who was the only begotten Son of God, and Lord of all arose, and girded himself with a towel, after the manner of a servant, then poured water into a bason, and began to wash his disciples feet, and to dry them with the towel wherewith he was girded; see on Matt. xviii. 2. § 74. 4. *He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments, and took a towel, and girded himself.* 5. *After that, he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.* But when it came to Peter's turn to receive that favour, he modestly declined it. 6. *Then cometh he to Simon Peter, and Peter said unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?* 7. *Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now, thou dost not know what I intend by this action, but thou shalt know hereafter.* 8. *Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet.* Jesus answered him, *If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me: If thou dost not submit to all my orders implicitly, thou art not my disciple; or, as others understand*

do quickly what he was about to do, he went out. Upon which Jesus mentioned the near prospect he had of being glorified, to insinuate that he knew Judas was gone out to betray him. From this time forth, there is nothing said of Judas by John, till he appeared with the armed band. Nevertheless, by the accounts of the other evangelists, Judas was present at the institution of the sacrament of the supper after the passover. Wherefore the passover being celebrated before Judas went out, the supper mentioned by John must have been that solemnity.

But it is objected, that the opinion I am contending for is inconsistent with John xiii. 27. where we are told, that when Jesus ordered Judas to do quickly that which he was about to do, the rest thought that he ordered him to buy the things they had *need of against the feast*; plainly importing that the supper they were then eating was not the passover. But the answer is easy; the feast of passover, properly speaking, lasted seven days, wherefore it was of the provisions necessary to the whole festival, and not of those requisite to the paschal supper which the disciples then spake.



understand it, unless I cleanse thee from the pollution of sin, emblematically represented by washing thee with water, thou art none of mine. But Peter understanding Christ's saying literally, supposed that his being washed was necessary to his partaking with him in the felicity of his reign. He answered therefore, John xiii. 9. *Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.* 10. *Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not, save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit:* one who has bathed himself, needs not after that wash any part of his body except his feet, which in coming out of the bath may have been dirtied. This he said in allusion to their custom of bathing themselves before they sat down to eat the passover; and with a design to teach us, that persons converted do not after that stand in need of an entire change of mind, but only to cleanse themselves from the particular sins which they happen to commit through infirmity. For that he spake of a spiritual washing, is evident from his adding, *and ye are clean, but not all*; ye are men of holy and virtuous dispositions, only ye are not all of you so. 11. *For he knew who should betray him*; he was perfectly acquainted with the wickedness of the traitor, therefore said he, *Ye are not all clean.* In this manner were the twelve disciples honoured by their Master, who performed unto them the office of the meanest slave. 12. *So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?* Know ye the meaning of what I have done? for the action was emblematical. 13. *Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye say well, for so I am:* I am really what you call me, being the Son of God, and Saviour of the world. 14. *If I then your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet:* If I have condescended to wash your feet, ye ought with pleasure to perform the humblest offices of charity to one another. 15. *For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you:* I have set you a pattern of humility to recommend it to you. And it must be acknowledged, that nothing shews us more effectually the necessity of this grace, than its being recommended to us by so high an example; a recommendation which, in the present circumstances, was peculiarly seasonable, for the disciples having heard Jesus say that the kingdom of God was at hand, (Luke, ver. 18.) their minds were so fired with ambitious passions, that before they arose from supper, they fell into an hot contention about sharing the principal posts in the kingdom. Our Lord added, Ye need not be ashamed to follow my example in this, seeing no servant can think it beneath him to condescend as far as his Lord condescends, neither can he that is sent grudge to imitate the humility of him that sent him. 16. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his Lord, neither*  
*be*



*he that is sent, greater than he that sent him.* And therefore knowing your duty in this particular, ye are happy if you practise it. 17. *If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.* I do not expect however that all of you will hearken to me, for I know there is one among you whom no instruction will profit. At the same time, that I should have called such an one to the apostleship, needs not surprise you, for I was well acquainted with the dispositions of each of you, when I made choice of you, and did not make choice of a traitor to be my apostle through ignorance of his character, but that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. 18. *I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the Scripture may be fulfilled (Psal. xli. 9.) He that eateth bread with me, hath lift up his heel against me.* This hint merits your particular notice, for I have given it to you before I am betrayed, to convince you that from the beginning it was determined in the divine decree, and foreknown by me to be so; and to prevent your calling my mission in question on that account. 19. *Now I tell you before it come, that when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he, even the Messiah; see on John vi. 71. § 62.* With assurance, therefore, may you go forth and do the duties of the office to which I have called you. He that believes you, my apostles, whom I send to preach the words of eternal life, believes me; and he who believes me, believes God, who has authorised me to teach men the way of salvation. 20. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me.*

§ CXXVIII. *Jesus openly declares that Judas would betray him.* Matt. xxvi. 21,—25. Mark xiv. 18,—21. John xiii. 21,—29.

THESE things spake Jesus concerning the perfidy of Judas. But as the thought presented itself immediately after he had given the disciples in general such a signal token of his love, the treachery of one of them could not but be very grieving to him, which was the reason that he complained of it to the rest at table, declaring with great concern that one of them should betray him. John xiii. 21. *When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, i. e. greatly troubled (see on Luke x. 21. § 81.) and testified, and said, Verily, verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.* Matt. xxvi. 21. *And as they (Mark, sat and) did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you (Mark, which eateth with me) shall betray me.* John xiii. 22. *Then the disciples looked on one another (with astonishment) doubting of whom he spake.* 23. *Now there was leaning on Jesus bosom, one of his disciples whom Jesus loved.* This was John, the memory of whose sweet disposition, and other amiable qualities, is perpetuated



perpetuated in the peculiar love which Jesus bore to him. Being the beloved disciple, he lay at supper on the same couch with Jesus; and next to him, reclining on his bosom. 24. *Simon Peter, therefore, not daring to ask Jesus himself, beckoned to him; that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake.* 25. *He then lying on Jesus breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it?* He leaned backward, and whispered Jesus in the ear, that the rest might not hear what he said. 26. *Jesus answered, he it is to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop\*, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon.* 27. *And after the sop, Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou dost, do quickly.* This he said immediately after he put the morsel into his mouth, but the disciples did not understand his meaning. 28. *Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him.* John does not here speak of himself, but of the other disciples; for though they could know nothing of the matter, in all probability he must have comprehended the meaning of Christ's words to the traitor. 29. *For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast, that is, the seven ensuing days of the feast; or that he should give something to the poor.* These meanings were what first occurred to the disciples. But being in great perplexity on account of his declaration concerning the treachery of one of their number, they did not think much upon what he now said to Judas. The declaration which engrossed their attention, had not pointed at any of them in particular; and the discovery of the person

was

\* John 26. *And when he had dipped the sop he gave it to Judas Iscariot.*] Ainsworth, in his annotation on Exod. xii. tells us, that Maimonides, in *Korban Pesach*, chap. viii. § 11. says, the Jews in eating the passover used a thick kind of sauce called *Haroseth*, made of palm-tree branches, or of raisins and such like berries, which they bruised and mixed with vinegar and other seasoning, to represent the clay whereof their fathers in Egypt made brick, called in the Hebrew language, *Haras, testa*. Into this sauce it is thought Jesus dipped a morsel of the meat he was eating, and gave it to Judas. See vol. I. p. 158. From the kind and smallness of the bit that was offered him (*ψαμμιον, frustulum, buccella; ψαμμιζ, τα τε ας τε απο-εαυματα*, Hesych. *frustra panis, crumbs of bread*) as well as from its being dipped in the sauce, it is probable that Jesus put it into the traitor's mouth. For to cut a morsel, and dip it in sauce, is the action of one who is going either to put it into his own mouth, or into the mouth of another. And what increases the probability of this conjecture is, that the devil is said to have entered into Judas upon his receiving the sop. 27. *And after the sop, Satan entered into him, i. e. took possession of him, and hurried him on to the execution of the crime he had resolved upon.* Because it was not usual to give a morsel into the mouth of any person at table, Judas, whose evil disposition prompted him to put the worst construction upon every thing, might take it as a reproof of his gluttony, especially if it was done while he was eating. Accordingly, thinking himself much affronted, the devil laid hold on his passion, and impelled him to execute the impious project which his covetousness had first suggested to him.



was made to John only. They were therefore swallowed up in grief, and each of them would fain have cleared himself. Matt. xxvi. 22. *And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, (Mark, one by one) Lord, is it I?* The idea of the crime laid to their charge, filled them with such horror, that on the first mention of it, they were astonished and speechless. But having recovered themselves while their Master talked with John, and gave Judas the sop, he had no sooner done speaking to the latter and was at leisure to attend, than they said to him one after another, with the utmost concern, "Lord, is it I?" 23. *And he answered and said, \* He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me.* To the eleven who were cleared by it, this was a joyful declaration which our Lord now made; but to Judas, whom it accused, it was perfectly confounding. Impudent as he was, it struck him speechless, pointing him out plainly, and uncovering the foulness of his heart. While Judas continued mute, Jesus had time to declare that his death should be brought about according to the divine decree, but that this would by no means excuse the person who betrayed him. 24. *The Son of man goeth (παρει, dieth) as it is written of him; but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed: it had been good (Mark, good were it) for that man, if he had not been born.* Upon this Judas recovering himself a little, asserted his innocence by a question which implied a negation of the charge. But Jesus silenced him, with positively affirming that he was the person. 25. *Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said.* See on John xiii. 30. § 129.

\* Matt. 23 *He that dippeth his hand with me, &c.]* Grotius on John, Lamy, Clarke, and others, think this implies that Judas had placed himself so near his Master as to eat off the same platter with him. But their way of lying on couches at meat, must have made it inconvenient for two or more persons to eat in that manner. It is more probable that the disciples being in the deepest distress, had left off eating, only Judas, to conceal his guilt, continued the meal, and was dipping his meat in the *Hareseth*, or thick sauce mentioned above, when Jesus happened to be putting his into it; which sauce, according to custom, was served up in a separate dish.

§ CXXIX. *Jesus institutes the sacrament of his supper, to keep up the remembrance of his sufferings, which he thus predicted the ninth time.* See § 127. Matth. xxvi. 26,—29. Mark xiv. 22,—25. Luke xxii. 19,—23. John xiii. 30. 1 Corinth. xi. 23,—25.

THE consideration of Judas' treachery did not sour our Lord's spirit in the least. For that his love to mankind might be the more effectual, he instituted the sacrament of his supper, to perpetuate the memory of it through all ages. Matt. xxvi. 26.



*And as they were eating* (*καθίσταντες δὲ αὐτὰν*, now they having eaten, namely, the paschal supper, as is plain from 1 Cor. xi. 25.) *Jesus took bread, \* and blessed it,* (Mark, *and blessed and brake it.* Luke, *and gave thanks and brake it*) *and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat, this is my body ;* this is the representation of my body broken on the cross. See a like form of expression, Gen. xli. 26, 27. Luke xxii. 19. *Which is given, viz. to death, for you : † This do in remembrance of me.* The passover solemnity was usually concluded with eating a little bread, and drinking a cup of wine. Jesus therefore, when he instituted the sacrament, did not appoint any new rite, but appropriated an old one to answer a new purpose. Hence the propriety of the expression, *This do in remembrance of me.* Do it no longer in remembrance of the deliverance from Egypt, but in remembrance of me, who, by dying for you, will bring you out of the spiritual bondage, a bondage far worse than the Egyptian, under which your fathers groaned, and will establish you in the glorious liberty of God's children. Do it in remembrance of me, who, by laying down my life, will ransom you from sin, and death, and hell ; and will set open the gates of heaven to you, that you may enter immortality in triumph. Matt. xxvi. 27. *And he took the cup, and gave thanks.* At the institution of the sacrament, Jesus gave thanks, not only before he brake and distributed the bread, but before he delivered the cup, to shew how infinitely we are obliged to God for our spiritual food, the flesh and blood of his Son, which nourishes the divine life in the soul. *And gave it*  
to

\* Matt. 26. *And blessed it.*] The word *it* is not in the original, for which reason, and because Luke, in the parallel passage, uses the word *ευχαριστῶν*, *he gave thanks*, many are of opinion that the word God should be supplied in Matthew, *He blessed God.*

† Luke 19. *This do in remembrance of me.*] From our Lord's words here recorded, and from those wherewith the apostle has concluded his account of the sacrament, 1 Cor xi. 26. *For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come,* (*καταγγελλάτε*, *ye preach*, *ye declare* the Lord's death ; ye assure the world of the truth of it), it appears that the sacrament of the supper was instituted, not only to bring Christ's sufferings, and the happy consequences thereof, to the remembrance of his disciples, but to demonstrate the truth of these things to the world in all ages. In this view the sacrament of the supper is the strongest proof of our Lord's integrity, and of the truth of his mission ; for if he had been an impostor, and was to have suffered death on account of his deluding the people, is it to be imagined that he would have instituted any rite with a view to preserve the memory of his having suffered punishment for the worst of crimes ? No ; this is beyond all human belief. And, therefore, since by this institution he has perpetuated the memory of his own sufferings, it is a strong presumption that he was conscious of his own innocence, that his character was really what the evangelists have represented it to be, and that our faith in him, as the Son of God, is well founded.



to them saying, *Drink ye all of it*: Mark xiv. 23. *And they all drank of it* (Luke, *saying*). Matt. xxvi. 28. \* *For this is my blood of the New Testament*, (Luke, *this cup is the New Testament in my blood which is shed for you*) which is shed for many for the remission of sins. As the words, *this is my body*, signifies this is the representation of my body, so the words, *this is my blood of the new covenant*, must signify, this is the representation of my blood of the new covenant, and by the same rule, that difficult expression, used 1 Cor. xi. 27. "guilty of the body and blood of the Lord," undoubtedly signifies, guilty of profaning or abusing the representation of the body and blood of the Lord. Wherefore Christ's meaning in the passage before us was this: All of you, and all my disciples in all ages, must drink of this cup; because it represents my blood, shed for the remission of mens sins; my blood in which the new covenant between God and man is ratified, *my blood therefore of the new covenant*; so that this institution exhibits to your joyful meditation the grand foundation of mens hopes, and perpetuates the memory of the same to the end of the world. 29. *But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine*, (Mark, *I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine*) until that day when † *I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom* (Mark, *till I drink it new in the kingdom of God*). He had made the same declaration concerning the passover-cup, Luke xxii. 18. § 127. Hence we gather his meaning upon the whole to have been this, that he would neither partake of the passover, nor of the sacrament, till (see on Luke xxii. 16. § 127.) he had the satisfaction to see the things signified by these institutions, fulfilled in the gospel-dispensation, which therefore was nigh at hand. Or we may interpret the words in a more general sense, thus: that he would not partake of any joy till he rejoiced with them in the communications of the Holy Spirit, which were to be bestowed plentifully on them as soon as the gospel-dispensation began. Others however understand them of heaven, which, properly speaking, is the Father's kingdom.

Our Lord was now deeply affected with his own thoughts, for he uttered some of the things twice that lay heaviest upon his spirit, as persons in great concern are wont to do; particularly after delivering the sacramental cup, and telling them that his blood

\* Ver. 28. *For this is my blood of the new testament, &c.*] These words of institution relative to the cup, shew that it is a primary end of this service to bring to the devout remembrance of Christians the death of their Master, as the foundation of the remission of their sins, and, in short, the whole mercy of the new covenant as founded on the shedding of his blood. Therefore they are who make the keeping up of the memory of Christ's death in the world as a simple fact, the only end of the Lord's supper.

† Matt. 29. *I drink it new*] See on John xiii. 34. p. 694. where it is proved that the word *new* applied to a subject, often signifies in Scripture excellency and truth, consequently the substance represented by any emblematical shadow.



blood was shed for them; he mentioned the treachery of Judas a second time. Luke xxii. 21. *But behold, the band of him that betrayeth me, is with me on the table.* 22. *And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined; but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed.* See on Matt. xxvi. 24. § 128. This second declaration came in very properly after the institution of the sacrament, which exhibits the highest instance of Christ's love to mankind; his dying to obtain the remission of their sins. For it shewed that the person who could deliberately do so great an injury to so kind a friend, must have been a monster, the foulness of whose ingratitude cannot be reached by the force of language. 23. \* *And they began to inquire, they began συζητῶντες to dispute, among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing.* Some of the disciples, peculiarly struck with horror at the thought of Judas' treachery, rebuked him, by asking with surprise, how he could be so base as to betray his Master. This accusation, no doubt, Judas repelled, by impudently denying the crime. Nevertheless, consciousness of guilt giving edge to the reproaches of his brethren, and to every circumstance of the affair, he could not avoid being in a great passion. Accordingly we are told that he immediately left the company, going away in all probability exceedingly displeased, as thinking himself insulted and affronted. And because this happened soon after Jesus had put the morsel into his mouth, nothing intervening but the institution of the sacrament, and the dispute of the disciples with Judas, both which may have been over in less than a quarter of an hour, John, who has omitted the institution of the sacrament and the dispute, connects the two thus: John xiii. 30. *He then having received the sop, went immediately out; and it was night: ὁὗτος ἐξῆλθεν, went out soon; so the word signifies, 3 John, ver. 14.* Thus the seemingly inconsistent accounts given by the evangelists, of the manner

\* Luke 23. *And they began to inquire among themselves which of them it was, &c.*] Matthew and Mark expressly affirm, that Jesus plainly pointed out Judas as the traitor, before the institution of the sacrament. Here Luke says, that after the institution of the sacrament, the disciples *inquired among themselves which of them it was that should do this thing*. But the difficulty may be removed by correcting the translation of Luke thus, *ἠρξάντο συζητῆσαι, they began to dispute* (so the word συζητῆσαι signifies, Mark viii. 11. ix. 10. Luke xxiv. 15.) *which of them it was that should do this thing*. For when Judas was marked out a second time, by our Lord's desiring the other disciples to behold the hand of the traitor that was with him on the table, (Luke 22.) it is natural to think the rest would upbraid him with his wickedness; and, considering his impudence, it is highly probable that he would flatly deny it. But they urging their Master's repeated declarations, and he insisting on his detestation of such a crime, alleged that some of their hands had been on the table when Jesus last spoke, and impudently charged them with the black design, which indeed was harboured no where but in his own breast. Thus the dispute among the disciples, mentioned by Luke, might easily have happened, notwithstanding our Lord had immediately before that pointed out Judas as the traitor.



manner in which Jesus discovered Judas' treachery, are easily reconciled. For the several branches of those accounts placed in the relative order above-mentioned, and taken with the circumstances which I have ventured to supply, and which are all natural, do exactly correspond with each other, and give us a full view of the affair, without the least alteration made in the particular order observed by any one of the evangelists in his narration.

**§ CXXX.** *The disciples contend about the chief posts a third time. See § 74. 106. The promise of the thrones is made to them the second time. See § 195. Jesus the first time foretels that Peter would deny him. See § 131. Luke xxii. 24,—38. John xiii. 31,—38.*

OUR Lord's sufferings were now at hand, Judas being gone out for a band of soldiers to apprehend him. After he was departed, Jesus took occasion to meditate upon the glory that would accrue both to himself and to God from those sufferings, and spake of it to his disciples. John xiii. 31. *Therefore when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him.* Moreover he told them, that having already done great honour to God by the past actions of his life, and being about to honour him yet farther by his sufferings and death, which would display his perfections, particularly his infinite love to men, in the most astonishing and amiable light, he was, in his turn, to receive glory from God: meaning that in his human nature he was to be exalted next to God in dignity and power, and that his mission from God was immediately to be supported by irrefragable attestations. 32. *If God be glorified (ἐπεὶ ὁ θεὸς ἰδοὺ γὰρ ἐξοῦται, seeing God is glorified) in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.* But the disciples imagining that he spake of the glory of a temporal kingdom, had their ambition fired afresh, and began to dispute with as much keenness as ever, which of them should be the greatest in that kingdom. Luke xxii. 24. *And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.* This contention Jesus composed by the arguments he had made use of for the same end formerly, § 106. 25. *And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them, are called benefactors: among the Gentiles they are reckoned the greatest men who have the greatest power, and who exercise it in the most absolute manner. Such, however, have at times affected the pompous title of Benefactors (Εὐεργετῆς, a surname which some of the kings of Egypt and Syria assumed) and thereby have tacitly acknowledged that true greatness consists in goodness. But your greatness shall not be like theirs; shall not consist in the unlimitedness of tyrannical power,*



power, though it should be joined with an affectation of titles which denote qualities truly honourable. Whosoever desires to be great or chief among you, let him be so by his humility, and by his serviceableness to the rest, in imitation of me your Master, whose greatness consists in this, that I am become the servant of you all. 26. *But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger: According to the manners of the Jews, the aged expected great service and submission from the young: and he that is chief, as he that doth serve* 27. *For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth.* These words may no doubt have a respect to the whole of Christ's life; yet they seem to refer more particularly to his having washed their feet a little before this, as John informs us, xiii. 14. Farther he told them, that because they had continued with him in his temptations, he would bestow upon them such a kingdom as his Father had appointed unto him. 28. *Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations.* 29. *And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me:* 30. *That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel* See on Matt. xix. 28. § 105. At the same time, to check their ambition, and lead them to form a just notion of his kingdom, he told them that he was soon to leave them, and that whither he was going, they could not follow him at that time; for which cause, instead of contending with one another about which of them should be the greatest, they would do well to be united among themselves by the happy bond of love. John xiii. 33. *Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me; and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go ye cannot come; (see on ver. 36.) so now I say unto you.* John xiii. 34. \* *A new commandment I give unto you. That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.* 35. *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.* By

\* [John 34. *A new commandment, &c.*] He called this *a new commandment*, not because mutual love had never been enjoined on mankind before, but because it was a precept of peculiar excellency; for the word *new* in the Hebrew language denotes excellency and truth, as appears from Psalm xxxiii. 3. Mark i. 27. Rev. ii. 17. And the reason of the idiom seems to have been, that novelty oftentimes has the same effect upon the mind with excellency, rendering an object acceptable, and raising admiration. He called this *a new commandment* also, because they were to exercise it under a new relation, according to a new measure, and from new motives. They were to love one another in the relation of his disciples, and with that degree of love which he had shewed to them, for they were to lay down their lives for the brethren, 1 John iii. 16. Withal they were to love from the consideration of his love, and in order to prove themselves his genuine disciples, by the warmth of their mutual affection. See ver. 35. *supra*.



By loving one another sincerely and fervently, ye shall prove yourselves my disciples to the conviction of mankind, who cannot but be sensible that love is a distinguishing feature in my character.

This excellent morality, however, did not make so great an impression on Peter, as the words which Jesus had spoken concerning his going away to a place where his disciples could not come. He therefore replied by asking whither he was going. John xiii. 36. *Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go \* thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards.* Thou art too weak at present to follow me in my sufferings; but thou shalt be enabled to do it afterwards. Farther, to make his disciples humble, and watchful, and kindly affectioned one towards another, he assured them that Satan was seeking to destroy them all by his temptations. Luke xxii. 31. *And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, (ye are, you my apostles) that he may sift you as wheat. 32 But I have prayed for thee (in particular) that thy faith fail not; and when thou art converted, (converted, hast returned back to thy duty) strengthen thy brethren;* by setting them an example of eminent faith and fortitude. But Peter was much offended that Jesus should have singled him out as the weakest; for so he interpreted his praying for him in particular. And supposing that he had mentioned Satan's seeking to winnow him, as the thing that would hinder him from following, he replied, Why cannot I follow thee now? Is there any road more terrible than the dark valley of the shadow of death? yet through these black and gloomy shades I am willing to accompany thee this moment. John xiii. 37. *Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake. (Luke, I am ready to go with thee both unto prison and to death.) 38. Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, the cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice, (Luke, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me).* Notwithstanding thy pretended affection and fortitude, a few hours shall not pass till, in great consternation at the dangers with which I and my disciples shall be threatened, thou shalt basely deny three several times that thou art my disciple. Peter therefore had no reason to be elated, though on a former occasion he

\* John 36. *Thou canst not follow me now.*] From this we gather that the declaration, ver. 33. *Whither I go ye cannot come,* is one of those general propositions, whereof there are many in Scripture, which were spoken with a limitation not expressed. Here we are directed to add the limitation thus, *Whither I go ye cannot come now.* For they were all equally with Peter to follow Jesus afterwards, by suffering a violent death. See more examples of this kind of expression, Luke xiv. 12, 13. John v. 31. 34. 45. vi. 17. xi. 25, 26.



he had confessed Jesus to be the Son of God. And his behaviour in this instance affords a very affecting example of human vanity, in the midst of the greatest weakness.

Our Lord having finished what he had to say to Peter in particular, turned to the other disciples, and put them in mind how that when they were first sent out, they had been prohibited to make any provision for their journey, and directed to rely wholly on God; and that though they had gone away without purse, scrip, and shoes, they had never wanted any thing, but had had abundant provision made for them by the kindness of men, whom God disposed to befriend them. Luke xxii. 35. *And he said unto them, When I sent you out without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? and they said, Nothing.* He told them, that matters were now altered; they were to be violently assaulted by their enemies, were to meet with the strongest temptations, and to be so hotly persecuted by their countrymen, that they could no longer expect any succour at their hands; for which reason, he ordered them in their future journeys to provide money, and clothes, and swords for themselves; that is, besides relying on the divine Providence as formerly, they were to use all prudent precautions in fortifying themselves against the trials that were coming on them. 36. *Then said he unto them, But now be that hath a purse let him take it, and likewise his scrip; and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one.* 37. *For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors.* You are thus to arm yourselves, because I am to be treated as a malefactor, agreeably to the predictions of the prophets. For I am to be apprehended by an armed band. I am to be bound by them, and carried before the judges. I am to be tried, and condemned, and crucified. Nor are these misfortunes at a distance; they are just at hand, *for the things concerning me have an end*; they are ready to be accomplished. He mentioned this first temptation as an example of what was to happen to them in their future ministry. But his disciples, mistaking his meaning about the swords, replied, that they had two. 38. *And they said, Lord, behold here are two swords.* The reason why the disciples had any swords at all, probably was that they might defend themselves against beasts of prey, which in those parts were very frequent and dangerous in the night-time. *And he said unto them, It is enough.* To shew them their mistake, he told them, that two swords were sufficient; which it is evident they could not have been for so many men, had he meant what he said in a literal sense.



**CXXXI.** *The consolatory discourse. Jesus foretels the cowardice of his disciples in general, also his own resurrection the first time.* See § 106. *And Peter's cowardice a second time.* See § 130. Matt. xxvi. 30,---35. Mark xiv. 26,---31. Luke xii. 39, 40. John xiv. 1,---31.

JESUS not only forewarned his disciples of the great trial that was coming upon them, and commanded them to arm themselves against it, but he spake a long discourse, wherein he animated them to sustain that trial manfully, and comforted them under the dismal apprehensions which it might raise in them. They were to see him crucified whom they had acknowledged as the Messiah. Wherefore, having been always accustomed to consider immortality and temporal dominion as the characteristics of their deliverer, and great worldly prosperity as the privilege of his subjects, the death of their Master, and the persecutions befalling themselves, could not fail to give a violent shock to their faith. But that the force of these blows might be weakened, he foretold his own sufferings, and thereby made it evident, that he voluntarily submitted to them. Withal, to reconcile their minds to the thoughts of his sufferings, he distinctly explained the end of them. John xiv. 1. *Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me.* Be not discomposed with the thoughts of those temptations that are to come upon you. As you believe in God, the almighty Preserver and Governor of the world, who is able to deliver you out of all your distresses, you ought to believe in me, who am not only sent by God, but being appointed governor and judge of the world, I can both protect you from evil, and reward you plentifully for whatever losses you sustain on my account. For, 2. *In my Father's house, whither I am carrying you, are many mansions, or apartments, in allusion to the palaces of kings; many different states of felicity, in which men shall be placed according to their progress in faith and holiness. If it were not so, I would have told you.* If there were no state of felicity hereafter, into which good men are to be received at death, I would have told you; and not have amused you with dreams of things that never shall happen. And therefore, though I am to be killed, ye need not be troubled at it, since I go away for no other reason but to prepare those mansions in my Father's house for your reception, which were destined for you from the foundation of the world. Matt. xxv. 34. *I go to prepare a place for you.* I die to open heaven to you. John xiv. 3. *And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also:* I will return and carry you with me into the mansions of the blessed, that you may be for ever where I am to remain, and that you may partake with me in my felicity.



ty. This Christ will accomplish when he comes to judge the world. John xiv. 4. *And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.* Ye cannot but know the place to which I am going, and the way that leads to it; for I have told you both plainly enough. 5. *Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest, and how can we know the way?* We know not where thy Father's house stands; and consequently cannot know the way to it. For as their thoughts turned very much upon a temporal kingdom, they might imagine that their Master intended to remove to some splendid palace on earth, which he was to prepare for their reception, making it the seat of his court. 6. *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.* Perhaps our Lord had now in view the metaphors which he formerly used, viz. "I am the door of the sheep," John x. 7. "I am the bread of life," John vi. 35. Or we may suppose the form of expression to be an Hebraism, whose meaning is, I am the true and living way; as Dan. iii. 7. "All the people, the nations, and the languages," signifies people of all nations and languages. But in whatever manner we resolve the sentence, its meaning is the same, viz. this, Faith in me, and obedience to my commandments, will lead you to the Father's house, whither I am going; they are the only true road to the mansions of felicity. 7. *If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: If ye had known my doctrine fully, and obeyed my precepts, ye should have known the perfections and counsels of my Father, and have done his will, as far as is necessary to your enjoyment of him. And from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.* 8. *Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.* It is hard to say, whether Philip as yet understood who the Father was of whom his Master spake. If he did, we cannot suppose that he asked a sight of the divine essence, which in itself is invisible, but like Moses he desired to see the inaccessible light wherein God dwells, it being the symbol of his presence in heaven. 9. *Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father, for I am the image of the invisible God; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?* 10. *Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doth the works.* Dost thou not believe that there is the closest union between the Father and the Son? and that as the Father knows all the thoughts of the Son, so the Son causeth men to know all the thoughts of the Father, respecting their salvation, and is vested with his power and authority. This thou must acknowledge, if thou considerest the works which I do, even the miracles whereby my mission is established. 11. *Be-*  
*lieve*



*live me, upon my own testimony, that I am in the Father, and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very works sake.*

Having mentioned his miracles, Jesus promised to endow his apostles with a power of working greater wonders than any they had ever seen him do. John xiv. 12. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me the works that I do shall he do also, and \* greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.* He made them this promise to animate them in their work, and that they might not despond in his absence, when they received such tokens of his remembering them, and such proofs of his power with the Father. Farther, he assured them, that whatever miracle they asked in his name he would perform, provided it tended to the glory of God; and the furtherance of the gospel. This promise indeed is conceived in general terms. 13. *And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.* Nevertheless, the subject treated of directs us to understand it particularly of miracles to be wrought in confirmation of the gospel. See John xvi. 23. He added moreover, that any other matter which they should ask for the furtherance of the gospel, he would by his own power and authority bring to pass. 14. *If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.* However, he required an exact and steadfast obedience to his commands, as the condition on which their prayers were to be heard. 15. *If ye love me, keep my commandments.* He told them, he would, in that case, send down another Comforter, Advocate, or Intercessor, who would abide with them constantly, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world could not receive. 16. *And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, (see on ch. xvi. 7. § 132.) that he may abide with you, not for a little while as I have done, but for ever.* 17. *Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, as you shall do, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him:* The world being blinded with sensuality, can neither discern

\* John 12. *Greater works than these, &c.*] How fully Jesus performed this promise is plain from the history of the Acts throughout, particularly ch. v. 17. where we find, that the very shadow of Peter passing by, cured the sick on whom it fell, and who were laid in the streets for that purpose. Also chap xix. 12. which informs us, that handkerchiefs and aprons which had touched the body of Paul, being applied to the sick and possessed, banished both the diseases and the devils. Nor should we, on this occasion, forget the gift of languages bestowed on the apostles, and which they were enabled to communicate unto others. Yet if these miracles are not thought to shew greater power than Christ's, we may refer the greatness whereof he speaks, to the effects which they were to produce on the minds of men. For in that respect the apostles miracles were vastly superior to Christ's; converting more people in one day than was done by all the miracles that Jesus performed during the course of his ministry. They converted thousands at once, made the gospel to fly like lightning through the world, and beat down every thing that stood in opposition to the faith of their Master.



cern the operations of his Spirit, nor partake of his joys: *But ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.* Ye know him, because he is with you in some measure already, enabling you to work miracles; and because he shall be given you much more abundantly hereafter. This happened on the day of Pentecost; from which time forth the Spirit dwelt with the apostles, and was in them. Thus, said he, though I am going away, John xiv. 18. *I will not leave you comfortless.* Besides, I will return to you myself: *I will come to you.* For although the time is at hand that the world shall see me no more, ye shall see me. 19. *Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more, but ye see me.* Nay, because I live, by arising from the dead, ye shall live also, by arising from the dead. 20. *At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father.* When ye see me after my resurrection, ye shall no more doubt that I am come from God; but ye shall be fully convinced, that I have all along acted by the power and authority of the Father, and that I have had his counsels fully communicated to me. *And you in me, and I in you.* Ye shall likewise be sensible that my will is fully revealed to you, and my power bestowed on you. For which reason, though I be absent in body, ye shall enjoy every advantage that could have accrued to you from my personal presence. Ye shall preach by my inspiration, and govern the minds of men by my power. In a word, ye shall be sensible that *I am in you.* Only you must constantly bear this in mind, that the great condition on which the performance of these my promises to you depends, is that you obey my commandments; for they alone love me who do so. And they who love me, shall be loved both of my Father and me; and as an expression of my love, I will manifest myself unto them. 21. *He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.* These latter words surprised the apostles not a little; for, according to the notions they had conceived of Messiah, he was to appear unto all the Jews, nay, to the whole world, and was to take unto himself universal empire. Therefore, 22. *Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?* Jesus told him, that he spake chiefly of a spiritual manifestation, such as the Father and he make of themselves to true believers, even on earth, by the influences of the Holy Spirit, who dwells in them as his temples, 1 Cor. iii. 16. For through the influences of the Spirit of God, believers are enlightened with the knowledge of the perfections of God, and with just views of the characters and offices of his Son. Moreover, by the same influences they are sanctified for an habitation of God, Eph. ii. 22. *who makes his abode with them,* that is to say, who fills them with all peace and joy in believing,



lieving, and with the most elevating hopes, and in consequence of their sanctification, sheds abroad in their hearts a sense of his love, and by so doing, gives them prelibations of heaven while on earth.

23. *Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me he will keep my words ; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.* This latter clause is remarkable. For had our Lord been a creature, though of the highest rank, it would have been blasphemy in him to have joined himself in this manner with God : “ My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.”

24. *He that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings : and the word which you bear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me* The reason why those who profess to be my disciples do not obey my precepts, is because they do not love me. For which cause, since my precepts are the precepts of God, such a person has no ground to expect God's love, or any manifestations from God.

John xiv. 25. *These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you.* I have spoken these things during my personal presence briefly, because my time with you is short. And though you may not just now understand many of the particulars mentioned by me, you shall have perfect knowledge of them afterwards. For my Father will give you the holy Spirit to supply my place ; and he shall be a Comforter to you, teaching you every article of the Christian faith, and bringing to your remembrance all the things I have ever said to you in the course of my ministry. 26. *But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you* 27. *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you : not as the world giveth, give I unto you* Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. “ Peace be to you,” was the common salutation and compliment mutually given by the Jews to each other at meeting, (see Jewish Antiquities, Disc. viii.) and at parting, (1 Pet. v. 14. 3 John 15.) But although this compliment implied a wish of every thing that could make one happy, it was often used without any meaning. At best it was but a wish, however sincere, and had no real efficacy in making him to whom it was given happy. Yet in the mouth of Jesus, by whose wisdom and power the affairs of the world are governed, a farewell wish was a matter of a very different kind. His *peace*, his parting blessing, would draw down all manner of felicity upon those who were the objects of it. Accordingly, he encouraged his disciples from that consideration, under the prospect of his departure, desiring them not to be in the least anxious about what was to befall them after he was gone. Moreover, he bade them remember what he had told them before, namely, that though he was to die, he would rise again



again from the dead. 28. *Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father; for my Father is greater than I.* These words afford a strong argument for the proper divinity of our Lord. For had he been a mere man, or even a creature of the highest order, the comparison would have been foolish and impertinent. 29. *And now I have told you before it come to pass, that when it is come to pass ye might believe.* I have foretold my sufferings and death, in order that when they happen, your faith, instead of being shaken, may be confirmed. But I will not have much opportunity to talk with you after this, because the devil will stir up wicked men to kill me. 30. *Hereafter I will not talk much with you; for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me:* Be assured, that I shall undergo the punishment of death, not because I deserve it,---31. *But that the world may know that I love the Father:* I undergo it to shew the world how much I love the Father. For in this I act according to his express commandment: *and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do.* *Arise, let us go hence:* let us, in conformity to the divine will, go away, that I may enter on my sufferings.

Having thus spoken, they finished the passover with singing a hymn, and went out to the mount of Olives. Matt. xxvi. 30. *And when they had sung an hymn, they went (Luke, as he was wont) out into the mount of Olives. (Luke, And his disciples also followed him)* The hymn which they sang was probably the conclusion of that which the Jews called the Hallel, or Great Hymn, and which consisted of the 113th with the five subsequent Psalms; part thereof being sung in the beginning, and part at the end of the solemnity. Luke xxii. 40. *And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray, that ye enter not into temptation:* When he was come to the scene of his sufferings, he desired them to fortify themselves by prayer, and forewarned them of the lamentable effects which his sufferings were to have upon them: they would make them all stumble that very night, agreeably to Zechariah's prophecy, chap. xiii. 7. Matt. xxvi. 31. *Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night; for it is written, I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.* To strengthen their faith, therefore, he not only mentioned his resurrection, but told them where they should see him after he was risen. 32. *But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee.* No sooner did Jesus mention the offence which his disciples were to take at his sufferings, than Peter recollected what had been said to him in particular before they left the house. Wherefore, being grieved afresh to find his Master still entertaining such thoughts of him, and being now armed with a sword, the vehemence



mence of his temper hurried him to boast a second time of his courageous and close attachment to Jesus. 33. *Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended.* In this protestation Peter, no doubt, was sincere. Nevertheless, he was greatly to blame for not paying a due attention to his Master's repeated predictions concerning his fall, for the preference which he gave himself above his brethren, and for leaning to his own strength, instead of begging assistance of him from whom all human sufficiency is derived. Wherefore, to make him sensible, if possible, that pride, confidence, and security, are great enemies to virtue, his Master thought fit to forewarn him again of his danger. Mark xiv. 30. *And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, that this day, even in this night, before \* the cock crow twice, (Matt. before the cock crow) thou shalt deny me thrice.* Matt. 35. *Peter said unto him, (Mark, But he spake the more vehemently) Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee, (Mark, in any wise). Likewise also said all the disciples.* They all joined Peter in professing their fixed resolution of suffering death, rather than they would deny their Master; yet the event was exactly as Jesus had said. From which we may learn how ignorant men are of themselves; and that to be virtuous, it is not enough that we form the strongest resolutions.

\* Ver. 30. *The cock crow twice, &c.*] Matthew expresses this differently; xxvi. 34. *Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice:* which are the words of the first prediction likewise; Luke xxii. 34. John xiii. 38. From Mark xiii. 35. it appears, that one of the four watches of the night was called *cock-crowing*, *αλωτροφωνια*. Now as this ended with the second crowing, *Before the cock crow*, is equivalent to, *Before the cock crow twice*; both signifying, before the expiration of the watch called *the cock crowing*, at three in the morning, when the cock commonly crows the second time. Or we may suppose, that this expression in the three historians is elliptical, and that the word *twice* is understood, and must be supplied. See examples of this kind of ellipsis on John xiii. 36. § 130.

§ CXXXII. *In the mount of Olives Jesus preaches a sermon to his disciples, in which he gives them directions with respect to their conduct, both as private Christians and as apostles.* John xv. 1,—27. xvi. 1,—33.

OUR Lord spent the remaining hours of his ministry in preaching to his disciples a long, but excellent sermon, recorded by John in the fifteenth and sixteenth chapters of his gospel. He began with the parable of the vine, taken from the vines that were growing around them on the mount of Olives. In this parable he taught them the excellency of his religion, and the nature of the relation they stood in to him by the profession thereof. Moreover, he explained to them the advantages which accrued to them from this relation. As the branches of the vine draw  
nourishment,



nourishment, and are made fruitful by their union to the stock and by the care of the dresser, so the disciples of Christ, by the belief of his religion, by the influences of the Spirit, and by the care of Providence, are made fruitful in holiness. John xv. 1. \* *I am the true vine*: My gospel is the most excellent dispensation of religion that ever was given to men. *My Father is the husbandman*: My religion is from God, belongs to him, and with its professors is the peculiar object of his care. 2. † *Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away*: Though by the outward profession of my religion you become members of the true church of God, you must remember that of itself this is not sufficient to entitle you to the favour of God, the great Master of this dispensation. You must answer the end for which it is given, by bringing forth fruit; otherwise he will cut you off, depriving you of all the advantages which true disciples reap from the sincere profession and practice of the Christian religion. He told them farther, that as the husbandman prunes the bearing branches of his vines, so God, among other methods, suffers the lovers of virtue to be spoiled of the conveniences of this life for no other reason, but that their virtue may grow the stronger, and become the more fruitful. *And every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, cuts off from it every thing superfluous, that it may bring forth more fruit*: In the course of his Providence, my Father sends a variety of afflictions upon every one who sincerely makes profession of my religion, and who diligently endeavours to obey its precepts, spoiling him of the temporal enjoyments which engage his affections, and render him unfruitful. These things Jesus said, to reconcile his disciples to the persecutions that were coming on them; perhaps also he had in his view the other methods which God makes use of for purifying his people; for in the following verse he represents his disciples as cleansed through the word he had spoken unto them. 3. *Now are*

\* Ver. 1. *I am the true vine.*] Dr Clarke and others rightly suppose, that in this passage our Lord alludes to Psal. lxxx. 8. Isa. v. 3,—7. where the Jewish church is represented under the figure of a vine; and God's peculiar care thereof is set forth by the care which an husbandman takes of his vineyard. Wherefore, by calling himself on this occasion the true vine, Jesus insinuated, that whereas the Jewish church and people had hitherto been the peculiar care of God, they were to be so no longer. From this time forth, all such as associated together in the joint profession of the Christian religion, and who, perhaps in allusion to this parable, were called by the apostle *the body of Christ*, were to be the true church of God, and the object of his care, whatever nation or country they were of.

† Ver. 2. *Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away*] The unfruitfulness of the branches here spoken of, and their being cut off on that account, prove, that by being in him, our Lord meant no more but one's being, by outward profession, members of his church, which is his body. Whereas, if he had been speaking of what divines call the mystical union of believers with Christ, such branches could neither be unfruitful nor cut off.



*are ye clean through the word which I have spoken unto you :* The doctrine I have preached to you, by the blessing of God, has cleansed you from many evil affections, has inspired you with holy desires, and invigorated you with good resolutions, so that, like the pruned branches of the vine, ye are fitted to bring forth fruit. Yet there is still need to caution you against backsliding.

4. *Abide in me, and I will abide in you :* Continue steadfast in the belief and profession of my religion, and be diligent in the practice of its precepts ; for this is the method to derive from me all needful supplies, particularly the influences of my Spirit, xiv. 26. the comfort of my presence, xiv. 23. the direction of my word, xv. 7. and the protection of my providence, xiv. 27.—*As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me :* Your continuing in the belief, profession, and practice of my religion, is as necessary to your performing good works, as the continuing of the branches in the vine is to their fruitfulness. To make you sensible of this was what I proposed, when I told you that I am the true vine, and you the branches. 5. *I am the true vine, and ye are the branches.* I must therefore repeat it again; that sincerity in the belief, steadfastness in the profession, and diligence in the practice of my religion, followed, as they always are, with my blessing and assistance, are the only means of making a man remarkably fruitful in holiness. *He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit ;—for without me, ~~quis~~ *quis*, separated from me, in allusion to the vine and his branches, ye can do nothing :* If you apostatize from me, and are deprived of my influences, you can do nothing for your own sanctification and salvation. 6. *If a man abideth not in me, he is cast out of the vineyard, as a branch broken off from the vine, and is withered, and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned as nuisances.* To shew you farther the necessity of abiding steadfastly in the belief and profession of my religion, I would propose to your consideration the dreadful effects and punishment of apostasy. By apostasy you separate yourselves from me, and deprive yourselves of all the advantages which accompany the sincere belief, steadfast profession, and diligent practice of my religion ; particularly the influences of my Spirit, the direction of my word, and the protection of my providence ; also the pardon of your sins, and the enjoyment of heaven. Nor is this all ; you shall be punished as apostates, for you shall be cast out of the presence of God, and gathered into hell, where you shall be burned as withered branches, persons fit for the flames. Grotius thinks that in this verse Jesus points out to the apostles, in an obscure manner, the crime and punishment of Judas, one of their own number, as an example and warning to them.

Our Lord having thus exhorted the twelve as disciples or pri-



vate Christians, proceeds to give them directions, as apostles or preachers commissioned by him, to teach his religion to the rest of mankind. John xv. 7. *If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.* The clause, *my words abide in you*, together with the promise, *ask what ye will. and it shall be done unto you*, shew that Jesus is speaking here to the twelve, in their peculiar character of apostles. *If ye abide in me*, in the sincere profession and practice of my religion: *and my words abide in you*; if ye faithfully teach mankind my doctrines and precepts, notwithstanding the difficulties you may meet with in this work: *Ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you*: ye may ask any miracle you please, in confirmation of your authority, and it shall be granted unto you. See verse 16. But though this be the primary meaning of the passage, it may, in a limited sense, be understood also of the pious prayer of all good Christians, as Dr Clarke observes.

8. *Herein is my Father glorified that you bear much fruit*, (see chap xii. 24.) *so shall ye be my disciples*: As the end for which my Father has given the gospel dispensation to men, is to make them fruitful in holiness, you my apostles, by spreading the true knowledge thereof through the world, and by reforming yourselves and others. will do honour unto God's wisdom and goodness in bestowing this dispensation upon you. Moreover, by your diligence in preaching and practising my gospel, you shall shew yourselves to be real disciples to me who am the author of the gospel, and who have chosen you to be my assistants in spreading the knowledge of it through the world.

9. *As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you*: The friendship which I have shewed you, and the honour which I have conferred on you, of preaching the gospel, is of the same kind with the friendship and honour conferred on me by the Father. *Continue ye in my love*; beware of doing any thing inconsistent with your character as my apostles, or which will diminish my love towards you.

10. *If you keep my commandments ye shall abide in my love*; if you carefully perform all the things which I have enjoined you, both as my apostles and as private Christians, you shall ever be the objects of my love: *even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love*; even as I have exactly performed all the duties of my mission; all the things which my Father enjoined me for the salvation of the world, and on that account am the eternal object of his warmest love.

11. *These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full*; I have spoken these things, hoping they will influence you to keep my commandments, whereby you shall be the objects of my love; and in the consciousness thereof shall be filled with the same kind of joy which I feel from obeying my Father's commandments, and from the consciousness of his love.



I have spoken these things likewise, that your eternal joy may be full in heaven, where you shall shine as stars, because you have turned many to righteousness. Others translate the passage in the following manner: *These things have I spoken unto you that my joy in you might remain*; I have spoken these things, hoping that by your diligence in obeying them, I shall always have cause to rejoice, on account of your behaving as my apostles and disciples ought to behave, and you cause to rejoice in my friendship, in the honour I have conferred on you, and in the eternal possession of heaven. 12. *This is my commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you*; as I told you before (chap. xiii. 34.) the chief of all the commandments which I enjoin you, whether as apostles or private Christians, is, that ye love one another; I do not mean after the hypocritical manner of the world, who often love in word and in tongue, while nothing is more remote from their heart, but in the sincere, tender, constant manner of my love to you. He was thus earnest in pressing them to mutual love, not only because the great design of his gospel is to promote mutual love, but because this virtue, exercised by the apostles among themselves and towards all mankind, was one great means of making their preaching successful, just as Christ's immense love to men will always have a great influence in drawing us to him. 13. *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends*; my love to you is stronger than death, for I will lay down my life for you. A greater degree of love than this never existed in the world. This is the love I bear towards you, and which I recommend as the pattern of your love to one another. 14. *Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you*: Ye are the friends for whom I will lay down my life, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Jesus had commanded them, verse 12. to love one another as he loved them. Verse 13. he insinuated that he loved them so as to lay down his life for them. Wherefore in this verse he tells them, he would reckon them his friends if they laid down their lives for one another, that being the thing he commanded them, by enjoining them to love one another after the pattern of his love to them. The plain proposition of this precept might have terrified the apostles; but to insinuate it in the beautiful manner our Lord has done, was altogether necessary for the direction of men who, by preaching the gospel, were to put their lives in jeopardy every hour, and who at last were to lose their lives in that cause for the benefit of the world. 15. *Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth*: Though the distance that is betwixt you and me, and your obligations to obey me, might have warranted me to treat you as servants, and particularly to conceal from you my counsels and designs, I have not in that manner acted towards you. *But I have*



have called you friends ; for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you : I have treated you as friends use to be treated ; I have admitted you into all the familiarities of friendship ; for I have all along communicated to you the most important of those gracious counsels, which my Father as the expression of his friendship imparted unto me ; nay, I have commissioned you to reveal them to the world, and have made you not only my friends but my assistants in the great work of saving the world. From this consideration, therefore, as well as out of gratitude to me, you ought to lay down your lives in the cause. Accordingly it is added, 16. *Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain* : You have not, as principals in this affair, adopted me your associate ; but I, the great author of the gospel, have adopted you my associates, to share with me in the vast honour of giving a new religion to the world. For I have ordained you my apostles, that you should go out into the world fraught with the doctrines of salvation, by the preaching of which you shall produce a general reformation both in the opinions and manners of the heathens, greatly to the honour of God, in as much as the Christian religion thus planted by you, shall remain to all ages—that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you ; I have clothed you with the dignity of my apostles. that whatsoever miracle you shall ask of God for the confirmation of your doctrine, or for the success of it, the consideration of your character, and the end for which you ask it, may induce him to grant it, especially if in your prayers you plead the relation you stand in to me as my apostles. 17, *These things I command you* (*ταυτα εντειλλομαι υμιν*, *these things I inculcate upon you*) *that you love one another* ; I have explained to you the high nature and vast importance of your office as my apostles, and I have put you in mind of my loving you, so as to die for you, that I may inspire you with ardent love to one another. You will need the help of this principle much, in the execution of your office. It will animate you to be diligent ; it will inspire you with fortitude ; it will enable you to lay down your life in the cause. For that you will meet with opposition and persecution while you preach the gospel, is certain ; only it needs not surprise you, when you consider how I your Master have been hated and persecuted by the Jews. 18. *If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you*. If the generality of men in all countries shall oppose and persecute you, as most certainly they will, you must encourage yourselves under these difficulties, by remembering, that I your Lord and Master have suffered the same things from the Jews. Moreover, you should consider that, John xv. 19. *If ye were of the world, the world would love his own* : If your dispositions and actions

were



were like those of the bulk of mankind; if you flattered men in their vices, and framed your doctrines into a consistency with their passions and interests, no doubt you would meet with general approbation, and be much caressed. *But because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.* Because your dispositions and actions are very different from those of the world, and because I have separated you from secular affairs, and commissioned you to oppose all false religions, to reprove mens vices, and to press the necessity of a general reformation, therefore the bulk of mankind every where will hate and persecute you. 20. *Remember the word that I said unto you, (Matt. x. 24.) the servant is not greater than the Lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you.* To reconcile you to the persecutions you are to meet with, you ought always to bear in mind what I told you on this subject the first time I sent you out, That no servant can expect to be better treated than his Master; and therefore seeing they have persecuted me, they will naturally persecute you. \* *If they have kept my saying they will keep yours also;* you are to expect that they will keep your saying only if they have kept mine; therefore, by the reception which my doctrine meets with, you may judge how yours will be relished. 21. *But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.* None of the evils which you shall suffer on my account or the gospel's, will flow from any deficiency in the evidences of my mission, or from any fault that can justly be found with the gospel. They will all flow from your persecutors being ignorant of the nature and perfections of the true God, who has sent me into the world, and of the doctrines of religion published to them under former dispensations. I assure you it is so; and when the things happen, you will actually find this to be the case. Withal, the consideration of it will strengthen you not a little. However the ignorance of the Jews in particular will not excuse them, seeing they have had more than sufficient means of information. If I had not appeared in person among them, according

\* Ver. 20. *If they have kept, &c.*] According to Gataker and Knatchbull, *εἰ τὸν λόγον μου τηροῦσαν, &c.* should be translated, *If they have watched my word, my doctrine* &c. with a design to find fault, *they will watch yours also.* For they suppose that *τηροῦσαν* here has the signification of *παρατηροῦσαν*, as it has likewise, Gen. iii. 15. *τηροῦσιν*, he shall observe or watch thine head, namely, to bruise it; *καὶ σὺ τηροῦσαι*, and thou shalt observe his heel, to bruise it. Whitby indeed affirms, that the right reading of this passage is *τιμωροῦσαι*, *conteres*. Yet there are other passages where the word seems to have the sense affixed to it by Gataker; for instance, Matt. xxvii. 36. *And sitting down, τηροῦν αὐτὸν οὐκ*, they watched him there, namely, to hinder him from coming down, or at least to catch him if he came down from the cross. 'Tis miracle his enemies desired him to shew, in proof of his being the king of the Jews. See also Matt. xxviii. 4.



according to their own prophecies, and proved my mission by arguments which put it beyond all reasonable possibility of doubt, they would not have been so much to blame for rejecting the gospel. But now that all the things foretold by Moses and the prophets are fulfilled in me, that my gospel is every way worthy of God, and that my mission from God is sufficiently proved by my miracles, they have no plea whatever to excuse their unbelief. 22. *If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not bad sin. But now they have no cloak for their sin.* In short, this clearness of evidence wherewith my mission is attended, makes the crime of rejecting me equal to, if not the same with the crime of rejecting God. John xv. 23. *He that hateth me, hateth my Father also.* The proofs of my mission, which I have principally in view, are my miracles, concerning which I must observe, that if they had not been more in number, and greater than the miracles of Moses, the Jews would not have been to blame for rejecting me, who am come to abrogate the institutions of Moses. 24. *If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not bad sin. But now they have both seen and hated me and my Father.* In my miracles, which are greater than any hitherto exhibited, they have seen, or might have seen who I am, namely, the only begotten Son of God. In these miracles likewise, they have seen who is my Father; for the glory of the whole divine perfections shineth in my miracles. Nevertheless, they have rejected me who have performed these miracles, and my Father likewise who sent me to perform them, so that they are utterly inexcusable. 25. *But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, they have hated me without a cause.* Be not surprised that I who am Messiah have been rejected of the Jews. It hath happened according to the prediction of their own prophets. For your encouragement, however, I assure you, that they will not always continue thus obstinately bent against me and my religion. When he who is to comfort you under all your troubles, by the aid he will afford you, and who on that account is justly styled the Comforter; when this person is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, to remain always with you, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall bear witness to me and to my religion so effectually, that many of the Jews shall be converted. 26. *But when the Comforter (see on ch. xvi. 7.) is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even \* the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father,*

\* Ver. 26. *The Spirit of truth which proceedeth, ἐκπορεύεται, Vulg. procedit, from the Father.]* Though all who understand the original language, know that the word here used signifies no more but *to go out*, interpreters are greatly divided about the meaning of it in this sentence. Some think it



*ther, he shall testify of me. And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.* In process of time, mens eyes shall be opened, to discern the authority of your testimony; they shall give credit to your reports concerning me, because ye have been my companions from the very first, consequently eye and ear-witnesses of all that I have done and said, so that after a while you shall bear witness concerning me, and preach my religion far more successfully than it will be in your power to do at the beginning.

John xvi. 1. *These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended.* The things which I have now told you concerning the hatred of the world, the reason of that hatred, the dishonour done by it to God, the punishment wherewith it shall be followed, and the supernatural assistance which you shall receive, I have spoken to keep you from taking offence at the further discoveries I am going to make of the evils you shall be exposed to, and to prevent your being overcome by those evils when they befall you. 2. *They shall put you out of the synagogues,* (*αποσυναγωγης ποιησουσιν υμας*, *they shall excommunicate you*, see on ch. ix. 22. § 78.) *yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you \* will think he doth God service.* The Jews will excommunicate you as the most execrable of men; nay to such a length will their hatred of you carry them, that whoever killeth you will think he doth the most acceptable thing possible unto God. 3. *And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father nor me.* The Jews will excommunicate you

it denotes what in latter times has been called the eternal procession of the Holy Spirit, whereby the manner of his subsistence is defined, as that of the Son is by the word *generation*. In particular, the ancient Greek church, from this text maintained, that the Holy Spirit derives his subsistence from the Father only; whereas, the Latins have ever affirmed, that he proceeds equally from the Father and the Son. Beza is of opinion, that the eternal emanation of the Holy Ghost is by no means handled here, but only the effusion of the Holy Ghost on the apostles; so that he who formerly remained with God, came as it were out from him, in his gifts shed down on the apostles. Whatever be in this, it is certain that the Greek word signifies only *to go out*, and it is never used any where else to signify an eternal emanation of the Holy Spirit. To conclude, concerning this emanation, it may be proper to observe, that they who assert it do not mean thereby any thing corporeal, but an emanation suitable to the spirituality of the divine nature, the manner of which, as it is not revealed to us, can neither be discovered nor explained by reason.

\* Ver. 2. *Will think he doth God service.*] *δοξη λατρειαν προσφερειν το θω*, *will think he offers sacrifice to God*; for *λατρευω* signifies all the different parts of divine worship, so must be determined to particulars, by the circumstances. Here it signifies *sacrifice*, because it is joined with *προσφερειν*, the word which constantly denotes the offering up of a sacrifice; see Rom. xii. 1. This gives a beautiful turn to our Lord's sentiment, the time shall come when the killing you shall be thought a part of the worship of God, and equally meritorious and acceptable with the offering of sacrifices.



you and kill you, and in so doing will think they serve God, because they are ignorant of his will concerning the abolition of the Jewish economy and the establishment of the new dispensation; also, because they do not know me to be the Messiah, and mistake the nature of my religion. For seeing Jesus is here speaking of the Jews, as is plain from verse 2. he cannot be supposed to say that they did not know God in general, but only, that they did not know his will concerning the gospel. 4. *But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them* I have spoken of these things to you, that when they come to pass you may remember I foretold them, which indeed will be of manifold advantage to you, both as it will convince you that these things did not happen beyond my expectation, and as it will hinder them from surprising or discouraging you. *These things I said not to you at the beginning because I was with you.* From Mat. x. 17,---28. it appears that Jesus plainly enough foretold the persecutions which his apostles and disciples were to meet with after his death. Wherefore, *ταυτα δι' υμιν εἰ ἀρχῆς με υμῶν*, must signify, I did not inculcate these things upon you from the beginning: I did not frequently insist upon them, because the lesson would come time enough before my departure. Or by *these things* we may understand the Jews ignorance of God's designs, and their ignorance of Jesus as Messiah, particulars which he had just now mentioned as the causes why the Jews would persecute his apostles, and which, no doubt, were more afflicting to the latter than the persecutions themselves; because these persecutions, they supposed, would end in the enjoyment of the kingdom; whereas the rejection of their Master cut off their hopes all at once. 5. *But now I go my way to him that sent me, and \* none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?* But now that my ministry is drawing towards a conclusion, and I am going to him that sent me, I could no longer defer speaking of these things to you. In the mean time I cannot but take notice, that though I mentioned to you my departure once before, (chap. xiii. 33.) none of you has inquired of me the reasons of my departure, nor the effects of it. However, I impute this to the deep impression which my prediction concerning the persecutions you are to meet with when I am gone, hath made upon you, filling you with sadness, and engrossing your thoughts. 6. *But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart.* 7. *Nevertheless I tell you*

\* Ver. 5. *None of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?* That the meaning affixed to this clause in the paraphrase is just, may be gathered from chap. xiii. 36. where we find Peter expressly asking him whither he was going. But it seems neither Peter nor the rest had thought more of the matter, for which Jesus here justly blames them, as his departure was an event of great importance to his apostles.



*you the truth ; it is expedient for you that I go away ; for if I go not away \* the Comforter will not come unto you ; but if I depart I will send him unto you :* Though you have not asked the reasons of my going away, I will declare them to you. Hear them then ; it is necessary even on your account that I depart, because if I do not go away and take possession of my mediatorial kingdom, the Comforter, by whose assistance as I told you (chap. xv. 26.) you are to convert the world, will not be given you ; whereas if I depart and take possession of my kingdom, I will send him unto you, as the first fruits of the exercise of my kingly power. 8. *And when he is come he will convince the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment :* ελεγχει τον κοσμον περι αμαρτιας, &c. He will convince the world of their sin, of my righteousness, and of my title to government. This description of the office of the Holy Ghost, seems to be taken from the office of an advocate at the bar, who, by producing witnesses, and pleading upon the proof, shews his adversary to be guilty of the crimes laid to his charge, or clears the innocence of his client falsely accused, and gets justice executed upon the guilty. 9. *Of sin, because they believe not on me :* When the Comforter comes he will, by the miraculous effusion of his gifts, convince the world of the sin they commit in disbelieving me, who, though absent, am able to confer such extraordinary powers on my ministers. Accordingly we find, that multitudes of the Jews were thus convinced by the miraculous effusion of the Holy Ghost upon the apostles, Acts ii. 37. 10. *Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more :* The Comforter, by teaching you the true nature of Messiah's kingdom, and making you explain it to the world, will convince the Jews more especially of the fitness of my leaving the world, of my going to the Father, and of my not returning any more till the last day. That this is the meaning of the passage appears from the precedent and subsequent verses, in which the latter clauses are explicatory of the former. For as the *sin* of which the world was to be convinced was that of their not believing on Christ, and the *judgment* was that of the prince of

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this

† Ver. 7. *The Comforter.*] παρακλητος, *Advocatus*. Among the Romans, it was usual for those who had any great law suit, to call their relations and friends to their assistance, who in this office were named *advocati*. These attended the parties in the court, some assisting them with counsel, others pleading for them, and others barely by their presence giving weight to their cause. Hence the word came to signify not only an advocate who pleads the cause of another, but a counsellor, a friend, a patron. In this passage the Holy Ghost is called παρακλητος, or *advocatus*, in the largest sense ; because he was to espouse the apostles cause, to accompany them wherever they went, to defend them from the attacks of their enemies, and to plead for them by the apologies, which he inspired them to deliver in their own behalf, and by the miracles which he enabled them to work in confirmation of their mission, so that he was in the properest sense their friend, counsellor, advocate, patron, and protector.



this world ; so the *righteousness* of which they were to be convinced, must have been the righteousness of Christ's going away, and of the disciples seeing him no more. And to say the truth, considering how firmly the Jews expected their Messiah was to erect a temporal kingdom, and to remain with them for ever on earth, it was absolutely necessary that the Holy Spirit should have been sent to convince them of the fitness of his departure out of the world. John xvi. 11. *Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged :* In the last place, when the Holy Ghost cometh, he will convert men from idolatry to the knowledge and practice of true religion, and by thus victoriously depriving the devil of that dominion which he has hitherto exercised over the minds of men, he will convince the world of judgment ; he will demonstrate, not only that the world is governed by God, (so the word *judgment* is often used) but that all power in heaven and earth is given to me, who by my Spirit have dethroned the devil. Moreover, this present punishment of the devil will be an earnest and proof of that judgment which at the last day I will execute upon him and all his adherents. 12. *I have yet many things to say unto you. but ye cannot bear them now :* I have many other things to tell you besides those I have mentioned, but your prejudices in favour of your own nation and law, your aversion to the Gentiles, and your weakness of understanding are so great, that you cannot yet bear the discovery, for which reason I judge it more prudent to be silent. The things our Lord had in view, were the abolition of the whole Jewish economy, the doctrine of justification by faith only, the reception of the Gentiles into the church without subjecting them to the law of Moses, and the rejection of the Jewish nation. 13. *Howbeit when he, even the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth :* You will sustain no loss by my not discovering these things to you now, for when the Comforter comes, who, on account of his office, is fitly styled *the Spirit of truth*, he will inspire you with the knowledge of them, and of every other matter necessary for you to understand. And that you may have the greater confidence in, and satisfaction from the revelations which he shall make to you, know that he shall not speak to you of himself, but by my direction, revealing to you nothing but what he is commissioned to discover. *For he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall bear, that he shall speak.* Besides, his revelations shall be so full and complete, that he will discover unto you all such future events as you may be any way concerned to know. *And he will shew you things to come.* 14. *He shall glorify me, for he shall receive (ἀντὶς) of mine, and shall shew it unto you :* He shall do me great honour in this respect, that all his revelations to you shall be perfectly conformable to the doctrines which I have taught you in person ; for though he shall be instructed and

commissioned



commissioned by the Father, he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. 15. *All things that the Father hath are mine; therefore, said I, that \* he shall take (ληψεται) of mine, and shew it unto you:* Be not surprised that I said unto you, he shall receive of mine and shall shew it unto you, for the whole treasures of the Father's wisdom belong to me; see Col. ii. 3. Those who oppose the divinity of Christ, seem to be at a loss for an explication of this passage. Le Clerc tells us it is highly figurative, that the subject treated of is such as cannot be understood by reason; that the manner of it is not revealed, and therefore, that it is not possible to mark precisely the proper sense of every expression. All these things he told them it was their interest, as well as their duty, to rivet in their memories, because they were his dying words. A few hours would put an end to his life, and though he was to rise again from the dead, he was to remain but a very little while with them. He was soon to ascend into heaven, and to be seated at the right hand of God. 16. *A little while and ye shall not see me; and again a little while and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father.*

The terms in which Jesus had spoken of his death, resurrection, and ascension being very obscure, the disciples were altogether at a loss to understand them. Wherefore, having revolved them a while in their own minds, they asked one another privately if they could comprehend what he meant. But each of them declared, with a kind of astonishment, that he could affix no idea to his words at all. John xvi. 17. *Then said some of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us? a little while and ye shall not see me, and again, a little while and ye shall see me: and because I go to the Father?* 18. *They said, therefore, what is this that he saith, a little while? we cannot tell what he saith.* Jesus observing their perplexity, and knowing that they inclined to ask him about this matter, prevented them by signifying that he knew what they had been saying. 19. *Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, do ye inquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while and ye shall not see me, and again a little while and ye shall see me?* I will explain myself upon this point: your not seeing me is an event that shall occasion great grief to you, and joy to my enemies. From these circumstances you may collect, that by your not seeing me, I meant my dying. However, your sorrow shall be turned into joy, you shall see me again, for I will rise again from the dead. 20. *Verily, verily I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice; and ye shall be sorry, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.* The state of mind you shall

\* Ver. 15. *He shall take.*] The original word here is the same with that in the former verse translated he shall receive; wherefore in both places the translation should have been the same.



shall be in when the events happen of which I am speaking, I cannot better describe than by comparing it to the condition of a woman in travail. During her labour she hath exquisite pain, because the birth approaches; but as soon as she is delivered, she forgets the anguish she was in, being filled with joy that she has brought one of the human species into the world. Just so you my disciples will be in the greatest distress during the time of my departure. But as I am to rise again from the dead, and to ascend into heaven, you will forget your sorrow and rejoice exceedingly; and from that time forth your joy shall be of such a kind, as that it shall not be in the power of men to rob you of it.

21. *A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow because her hour is come; but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembers no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.*

22. *And ye now therefore have sorrow, but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.* One great source of your joy in the period I am speaking of will be, that your understanding shall be enlarged and enlightened, so that you shall have no need of my personal presence with you, nor any occasion to ask questions concerning intricate points, as you find yourselves obliged to do now. And if ever you stand in need of instruction, or assistance, or any other blessing, whether for the propagation of the gospel, or your own salvation, the Father will immediately supply you with it upon your asking it in my name. 23. *On that day you shall ask me nothing (ἐπεὶ ἐγὼ πέμψω τὸ Ἅγιον ἐν ὑμῖν) verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.* See on chap.

xiv. 13. On this occasion I must put you in mind that you have never yet prayed to God in my name. From this time forth I command you to put up all your petitions in my name, and you shall receive such gracious answers as will exceedingly increase your joy. 24. *Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name, ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.* Perhaps you do not yet understand me, because I have expressed myself in dark sayings; but you may comfort yourselves with this thought, that the time is at hand when I shall speak no more obscurely, but by the teaching of my Spirit I shall shew you, in plain language, the whole counsels of God, relating to the erection of his church and the salvation of men. 25. *These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs; the time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father.* I repeat it to you again, that after my ascension you shall offer up all your addresses unto the Father through my mediation; by this I do not mean, that I will solicit the Father in your behalf, as if he was unwilling to bestow on you the blessings you stand in need of. No; the Father himself bears a warm love towards you, chiefly on this account, that ye are my apostles, have loved



me, and have believed that I came from God. 26. *At that day \* ye shall ask in my name ; and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you.* 27. *For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.* 28. *I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world ; again I leave the world and go to the Father :* To conclude, the true and proper meaning of my discourse to you at this time, and particularly of the expression which appeared so obscure to you, is, that as I was commissioned by the Father, and came into the world to reveal his will to mankind, so, having finished that work, I now leave the world, and return to the Father from whom I came. 29. *His disciples said unto him, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb.* 30. *Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee ; by this we believe that thou camest forth from God :* We acknowledge that now thou speakest in such a manner as we can understand thee ; for what thou sayest is by no means dark, like the things which thou utteredst before. Moreover, by the things which thou hast now spoken to us, we clearly perceive that thou knowest the hearts of men ; and that in conversing with men, thou hast no need that they should tell thee their thoughts by any question. In short, thy knowledge of our hearts fully convinces us that thou art come from God. It seems through the whole of this discourse Jesus had obviated the objections, and answered the questions which his apostles were going to propose, or would gladly have proposed to him. See ver. 19. 31. *Jesus answered, do ye now believe ?* 32, *Behold the hour cometh, nay is now come, that ye shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave me alone ; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me :* Are ye now at length fully persuaded that I am the promised Messiah ? Be on your guard. Your faith in me is not so firm, but it may be shaken. For the time is coming, nay is come already, when every one of you shall desert me, flying wherever you think to be in safety from the approaching danger ; so that I shall be left singly to encounter mine enemies. Nevertheless, I am not alone, because the Father is with me continually. 33. *These things I have*

\* Ver. 26. *Ye shall ask in my name, &c.*] This is the fourth time our Lord enjoined his apostles to offer up their petitions in his name. See ver. 23, 24. and ch. xiii. 14. The frequency of the injunction, shews the importance of the matter enjoined ; for whether we understand Jesus as speaking of the things requisite to the conversion of the world, or of such things as are necessary to the salvation of individuals, it is evident that the great end of the mediation of Christ, is to impress mankind with a deep sense of their own sinfulness, which makes them unfit to approach the divine presence directly ; and of the merit and efficacy of Christ's death ; whereby they have access to God. Wherefore, by the very form of our devotions, these great doctrines of our religion are continually inculcated upon us.



*have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world: I have said these things to you concerning my departure out of the world, concerning the coming of the Holy Ghost, concerning my resurrection from the dead, concerning the Father's hearing your prayers, and concerning the great trial you are to be exposed to, in order that you may have consolation in the prospect of the benefits you are to receive, and not be terrified when the afflictions draw nigh which are to overtake you. The truth is, you shall have great tribulation in this present life, because the malice of men will every where pursue you; nevertheless be not discouraged; rather take heart, by reflecting how, through constancy and patience, I have overcome the malice of the world, and that I am able to make you overcome it in like manner also.*

§ CXXXIII. *Jesus prays with his disciples before his death.*  
John xvii. 1,—26.

JESUS having thus finished his ministry, and given his disciples all the instructions he judged necessary, closed the whole with a solemn prayer to God, wherein he asked for himself, that he might be reinstated in his original glory with God; for his disciples, that they might be preserved in unity, and kept from evil; and for all believers, that they might be with him for ever in heaven. This has been called our Lord's intercessory prayer, because it is considered as a pattern of the intercession he is now making for his people in heaven. John xvii. 1. *These words spake Jesus, and lift up his eyes to heaven, he put himself in the posture of prayer, and said. Father, the hour is come, glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: The time of my sufferings is come; let me have such succours from thee as will enable me to bear them; let the circumstances of my trial, both in the Jewish and Gentile courts of judicature, be such as will plainly prove my innocence; and let my death be accompanied with such interpositions of thy power, as will remove the scandal of the cross, and demonstrate the relation I stand in to thee; particularly let me be raised from the dead, and taken up into heaven; finally, shed down upon my apostles such miraculous gifts as will qualify them for bearing witness to my miracles, my death, my resurrection, and my ascension. Thus glorifying thy Son, he also will glorify thee, by converting to the belief and practice of true religion, many who will celebrate thy praises eternally. For thou hast sent thy Son into the world, and given him power over all men in this respect, that he can bestow eternal life upon as many as thou hast given him; a consideration which he ever reflects upon with the highest joy. 2. As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. 3. And this is*  
life



*life eternal, that they might know thee \* the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent* : Now what he enjoins as the means of eternal life, is, that men should acknowledge thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. 4. *I have glorified thee on earth, I have finished the work thou gavest me to do* : During my abode on earth, I have promoted thy glory, by bringing thy creatures, who were wandering in error and ignorance, to the knowledge of true religion, and by putting them in the way that leadeth to happiness. Thus have I finished the great work which thou gavest me to do on earth. 5. *And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with † the glory which*

\* Ver. 3. *The only true God* ] *αὐτὴ δὲ εἶναι ἡ αἰώνιος ζῶν ἰνα γινώσκουσιν ὅς τοι μόνον ἀληθινὸν Θεόν, καὶ ὃν ἀπεμύλας Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν.* This is the eternal life, that they should know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I teach that men should know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent, as the means of obtaining that eternal life which thou hast given me power to bestow. Or the meaning may be, Now this eternal life is bestowed by me on men, that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent; importing, that the happiness of eternity will consist in the knowledge of God and Christ. It is justly observed by Grotius, that the Father is here styled the only true God, in exclusion of those deities which the ignorance and folly of the heathens had introduced. For as in the latter clause, our Lord undoubtedly spake of the Jews, when he mentioned it as the means of eternal life, that they should know Jesus Christ; so it is probable, that in the former he had the Gentiles in his eye, when he represented the knowledge of the true God as the road to felicity. If so, we cannot, from this passage, infer that Jesus is not truly or really God. For had this been the meaning of the words, would the evangelist have begun his gospel with so solemn a declaration of our Lord's divinity? Besides, in other passages of scripture, the word *μόνος* denotes a partial exclusion. For instance, Gen xlii. 38. Jacob, speaking of Benjamin, says, *His brother is dead, καὶ αὐτὸς μόνος κατὰλειπταί, and he only is left.* He did not mean, that he was his only son absolutely, but his only son by Rachel. In like manner, Luke ix. 18. *And it came to pass as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him*; where *κατὰ μόνος* is to be understood, in exclusion of the multitude, and not of the disciples who were now with him. So also, Luke ix. 36. Jesus is said to be left (*μόνος*) *alone*, notwithstanding the three disciples were with him. The meaning is, he was alone, in respect of Moses and Elias, who were now departed from him. And, to give no more instances, Jude, ver. 4. uses the word *μόνος* in this partial sense, where, speaking of some wicked men in his time, he says, *they denied, τοὺς μόνους Δεσποτὰς Θεοῦ, καὶ κυρίον αὐτῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν.* For whether the first clause is understood of Christ, it cannot mean that he is our only Lord and God, in exclusion of the Father; or whether it is understood of the Father, it cannot be said that he is our only Lord in exclusion of Christ, who is expressly styled *Δεσποτὴς*.

† Ver. 5. *The glory which I had with thee before the world was.*] The Socinians, who deny, not only our Lord's divinity, but his existence before he appeared in the world, are at a loss how to explain this passage in consistency with their opinion. They imagine, that as in the prophetic writings, things to come are spoken of as already existing, to denote the divine



*which I had with thee before the world was :* The work which thou gavest me to do on earth being now finished, I beg of thee, O Father, to exalt me to the state I was in, before I came down upon earth. Let me enjoy that glory and dignity which I possessed with thee before the world existed. John xvii. 6. *I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world.* In the Hebrew language, the name of any thing signifies the thing itself, Acts iii. 16. Our Lord's meaning is, I have explained thy nature and perfections, I have declared thy merciful designs towards the world, and I have fully taught thy will and worship unto the men whom thou gavest me out of the world ; the persons who were chosen by thee, out of all mankind, to be my apostles. See John vi. 44. *Thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and they have kept thy word :* my apostles belonged to thee, and thou gavest them to me. Nor was thy choice of them improper, for hitherto they have sincerely obeyed thy will, according to the discovery thereof which thou hast made to them. By the apostles belonging to God, some understand their being elected by God from eternity to everlasting life ; others, their being pious and good men ; others, their being sincere disciples of the former dispensation, which God had given by Moses. And it must be owned that this latter interpretation best preserves the propriety of the expression. By the Father's giving these men to Christ, many understand his pointing them out to him as fit to be his apostles ; and that in answer to the prayers which,

divine decree concerning them. and the certainty of their happening ; so Jesus is here said to possess glory with the Father before the foundation of the world, not because he then existed. but because that glory was appointed him in the divine decree from eternity, and was certainly to be bestowed upon him in the fulness of time. Withal, in confirmation of this observation, they cite Rev. xiii. 8. where Christ is called a lamb slain from the foundation of the world ; and 2 Tim. i. 9. where the apostle, speaking of the favours conferred on Christians, says, " Hath saved us, and called us, according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." But here, without laying the whole stress of the matter on the answer given by Whitby, namely, that these passages are mis-translated, I observe, that though, for the reasons mentioned, the sacred writers, when warmed with the grandeur of their subject, might in their discourses represent the great events which were to befall the church under the gospel-dispensation, as existing from eternity ; yet no fire of imagination could authorise the figure in the present instance. For it were absurd to fancy that Jesus, in this his last solemn prayer with his disciples gravely spake of himself as existing from eternity, and as enjoying with God blessings which were to be bestowed upon him only in time. Such figures, however proper they may be in prophecy, are not of the style of prayer ; far less of our Lord's prayers, which are remarkable for their simplicity. Besides, it should be remembered, that this is not the only passage which speaks of Christ's pre-existence ; for the evangelist John, chap. i. represents him as existing from eternity, and making all things. And chap. viii. 58. of the same gospel, Jesus himself tells us that he existed before Abraham. And the apostle Paul affirms, Phil. ii. 6 that before Jesus took the form of a servant, he was in the form of God.



which, on the night before their election, he put up to God for direction in this important affair, Luke vi. 12. § 37. See verse 9, 10. 7. *Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me, are of thee*: These men are fully persuaded, that the commission whereby I act, the doctrine of salvation which I teach, the miracles which I perform, and the authority with which I am clothed, are all really derived from thee. In this, indeed, they have acted upon the surest evidence; for I have taught them no other doctrine but that which thou gavest me to teach. Accordingly, being fully sensible that my doctrine is in all points agreeable to thy blessed nature and perfections, they have received it as such, and have known assuredly that I am no impostor, but a prophet truly commissioned by thee; wherefore, on all occasions, they have openly declared their belief that thou hast sent me. 8. *For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee; and they have believed that thou didst send me*. 9. *I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine*. The persons here prayed for, are not good men in general, in opposition to the bad, who are often called the world; but those good men in particular, who were given to Jesus by the Father to be his apostles; and who by that office were distinguished from the rest of his disciples. This appears from ver. 12. where he says he had kept all the persons he was praying for in the faith and practice of true religion, except the son of perdition; and from verse 18. where he says he had commissioned them to go forth into the world, for the same purpose that the Father had sent him into the world; and from verse 20. where he expressly distinguishes the persons he was praying for, from all other believers whatever. The reason assigned for making them the subject of his prayers at this time is remarkable, *For they are thine*: I employ the last moments of my life in praying, particularly for my apostles, because they are more especially thy servants, destined for that work which is the great object of thy attention, the instruction and salvation of the world. 10. *All mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them*. All my servants are thy servants; that is, whosoever assists me in my work, serves thee in thy great designs of love and mercy to men. For the same reason, thy servants are my servants. Every one who really serves God, must join issue with me, and assist me in my work. And by the zeal, faithfulness, and success of my servants, in converting the world, I am greatly honoured. 11. *And now I am no more in the world; having finished the work thou gavest me to do, I am no longer to continue in the world: but these are in the world; my apostles are to continue in the world to carry on this gracious design: and I come to thee; I return to thee by*



whole appointment I came. *Holy Father, preserve, through thy own name, these whom thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are* \* : O thou, who art the source of all truth and righteousness, let those men whom thou hast given me for assistants, be for ever preserved by thy power, in the firm faith of the doctrines I have taught them, and in the uninterrupted practice of the precepts I have delivered unto them; that when they go abroad into the world, they may teach the same things, and be ever united in the same blessed design; after the pattern of that most perfect union of counsels and designs which subsists between thee and me. 12. *While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name; those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost but † the son of perdition, that the scripture might be fulfilled.* During my personal abode with them, I kept them in the firm faith, and in the steadfast practice of the precepts of my religion, so far as I revealed these unto them. I say, the twelve men whom thou gavest me for apostles, I have thus kept; inasmuch, that none of them has apostatised but Judas Iscariot, that wicked person, who deserves perdition; see chap. xviii. 8, 9. And his apostasy has happened, not through any defect in my care, but in conformity to thy will, permitting his perfidy for the wisest reasons, (see on John vi. 30. § 62.) and therefore it was long ago predicted in the scriptures, particularly Psalm cix. 8. See John xiii. 19. § 127. John xvii. 13. *And now I come to thee, and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.* I am now about to return to thee, having finished my work; yet, before I leave the world, I offer this prayer in behalf of my apostles, with this intention, that being heard for them, they may receive all the endowments necessary to qualify them for converting the world, and be filled with my joy, the great joy I have in being the instrument of saving mankind. See chap. xv. 11. 14. *I have given them thy word, and the world hath hated them because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.* I have omitted nothing that on my part was necessary to fit them for converting the world, and for partaking of my joy; for I have delivered to them the doctrine which thou gavest to me. The world indeed hateth them, and will persecute them, because they are

\* Ver. 11. *That they may be one as we are* ] The unity which Jesus here claims with the Father, is by no means a personal union, for no such thing could subsist between Christ's disciples; but it is an union of counsels and designs. This appears likewise from ver. 12, where he says, that during his personal abode with them, he had kept them all in the Father's name, except the son of perdition.

† Ver. 12. *The son of perdition.* ] As the phrase, *son of death*, 2 Sam. xii. 5. (see the Hebrew), signifies one who deserves death; and Matt. xxiii. 15. *a child of hell*, signifies one who deserves hell; so here *son of perdition* signifies a person who deserves perdition.



are neither animated by their principles, nor conformable to them in their practice, in which respect they resemble me. These persecutions which shall befall them, while executing the duties of their ministry, is another great reason why I offer up this prayer for them. Nevertheless, my meaning is not, that, on account of these difficulties thou shouldest remove them out of the world by death; but only that thou shouldest grant them the direction of thy Spirit, and the protection of thy providence; whereby they will be preserved both from the evil of sin and of temptation. John xvii. 15. *I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.* 16. *They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.* It is with great pleasure that I reflect on their being separated from the world both in principles and practice, and that in this respect they so nearly resemble me; hence I am the more solicitous that they be preserved untainted and blameless after my departure. Wherefore I pray, that through the influence of thy truth upon their minds, thou wouldst give them such a strong inclination to the work of the ministry, that they shall wholly devote themselves to it, whatever difficulties it may expose them to. Do this, I beseech thee for the effectual spreading thy word which I have commissioned them to preach as the truth itself. 17. \* *Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.* 18. *As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.* I beseech thee sanctify them by thy truth, because I have sent them into the world to prosecute that great and good design upon which thou sentest me into the world. 19. *And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through thy truth.* The chief thing I had in view when I entered on my ministry, was, that my apostles might be prepared for the work of the ministry by the truths I was to teach, and by the miracles I was to perform before them in the course of my ministry. It is likewise one of the ends for which I now devote myself to death; inasmuch as the doctrines I have taught them, and which they are to preach, being thus sealed with my blood, will be offered to the world with the strongest evidence; not to mention that my resurrection from the dead will be a strong proof, first, of my mission from God, and, next, of theirs who act by authority from me.

Having

\* Ver. 17. *Sanctify them through thy truth.* ] *αγιασεν αυτους εν τη αληθεια σου.* This Whitby would have translated, *Sanctify them for thy truth*, i. e. for the propagation of it. To sanctify, signifies not only to make holy in the moral sense, but to dedicate and set apart for religious uses. Thus the word is used often in the Old Testament, and this sense the connection directs us to put upon it here, though at the same time it must be acknowledged, that were we to consider the passage separately, the ordinary sense would be extremely just; the word of God which itself is truth, being the great means of the sanctification of men.



Having thus prayed for his apostles, that in the great duties of their office they might ever be under the direction and protection of God. Jesus proceeded to ask blessings for all believers whatsoever. John xvii. 20. *Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also that shall believe on me through their word* : I do not make my apostles the only subjects of this my last prayer ; I pray likewise for all such as shall, by their preaching, be brought to believe on me. 21. *That they all may be one as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee ; that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me* For those who shall be converted by my apostles, I beg the gracious influences of thy Spirit, whereby they shall maintain the unity of the faith, and all agree in one doctrine ; that as in this great design of instructing, converting, and saving the world, there subsisteth a most perfect union between thee and me, they also may be taken into the union, and agree as perfectly with us, and among themselves, as thou art in me, and I in thee ; the effect of which will be, that the world discerning their agreement among themselves, and with God, will believe that I, their Master, have been sent into the world by God. The propriety of this request will appear to all who consider, that many of those who were converted by the apostles, applied themselves to preach and propagate the gospel. Moreover, the glory of inspiration, of a divine mission, and of the power of miracles to confirm that mission, which thou gavest unto me, I have bestowed on my apostles, and on those who shall be converted by them and employed to preach the gospel to the world ; in order that, being commissioned by the same authority, and illuminated with one spirit, they may fully agree in their doctrine, and their labours tend to one end. John xvii. 22. *And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one.* 23. *I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them even as thou hast loved me.* Grant that my power working in them may inspire them with all knowledge and utterance, and enable them to perform miracles, even as thy power and inspiration have heretofore wrought in me ; that so agreeing in one scheme of religion, they may become worthy messengers of the true God ; and that the world may know, both that thou hast sent me their Master, and that thou approvest of them and of their undertaking, even as thou hast approved of me. This branch of our Lord's prayer was extremely necessary ; for if the first preachers of the gospel had differed in their accounts of the life and doctrine of Christ, or in the representation which they gave of the Christian scheme, they would have given rise to many different sects, which would have endangered the very being of Christianity itself ; and mankind would have been altogether at



a loss to know which was the true doctrine of Jesus Christ. How fully this prayer for the unity of the first preachers of the gospel was answered, we learn from the history of the Acts; and their unity must appear quite remarkable, when it is considered what vast numbers were employed in preaching the gospel up and down the various countries of the world. Nevertheless, our wonder will cease, when we call to mind that all who possessed the power of miracles, and preached with any authority, were inspired by the same Spirit of God, so could not but all agree in one scheme of religion. 24. *Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, may be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me.* (See verse 5.) With respect to those in every age and country, who shall sincerely believe and obey me, my will is, that after their work here is over, they may be with me in heaven, whither I am going, (verse 11.) that they may behold the full splendour of the glory which thou hast given me, and be made happy with seeing me so. *For thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world:* As thou lovedst me before I came into the world, even before the world was, I shall not be less the object of thy love, now that I have accomplished the work which thou gavest me to do. My disciples, therefore, in beholding the glory which thou wilt bestow upon me, shall be happy, both as it will shew them how much thou approvest my design, and how happy I am made thereby. 25. *O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee, but I have known thee, and those have known that thou hast sent me:* O Father, who art the author of all righteous designs, and the lover of righteous men, the world, ignorant of thy nature and perfections, and of thy gracious counsels for men's salvation, has rejected me, notwithstanding I have every where demonstrated that I am fully acquainted with these thy counsels. But my disciples knowing that thou hast sent me, have believed in me as Messiah, which is the reason I am so solicitous that they should behold the glory thou hast given me. 26. *And I have declared to them thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me might be in them, and I in them:* Because my disciples have believed in me as thy messenger, I have with the greatest care taught them thy nature, perfections, and counsels. Nevertheless, being now incapable, by reason of their prejudices, of receiving full information on these points, I will instruct them afterwards by the illumination of my Spirit, that the love which thou hast borne to me as thy messenger, may be shewed to them as thy messengers likewise, and that being inspired by my Spirit, they may have me as it were dwelling within them, so as always to act by my authority.



§ CXXXIV. *Jesus suffers in the garden.* Matt. xxvi. 36,—46. Mark xiv. 32,—42. Luke xxii. 41,—46. John xviii. 1.

WHEN the intercessory prayer was ended, Jesus and his disciples came down from the mount of Olives, into a field below called Gethsemane, Matt. xxvi. 36. *Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane.* Through this field the brook Cedron ran, and in it, \* on the other side of the brook, was a garden, commonly known by the name of the *Garden of Gethsemane*. John xviii. 1. *When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples.* Mark xiv. 32. *And he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here;* perhaps at the garden door, within; for John says expressly, that the disciples went into the garden with him: *while I shall pray* (Matt. *while I go and pray yonder*). 33. *And he taketh with him Peter, and James, and John,* namely, to be witnesses of his passion, as they had been of his transfiguration; the rest being left at the garden door, to watch the approach of Judas and the band---and began to

\* “On the other side of the brook was a garden.”] Reland indeed thinks Gethsemane was a particular spot in the mount of Olives. But its situation, like that of some other places mentioned in the gospels, has been settled by considering the description of a particular evangelist only, without comparing their accounts together. From John xiv. 31. it appears, that Jesus went out with his disciples immediately after he had pronounced the consolatory discourse; for at the conclusion of it he said to them, *Arise let us go hence.* And considering the subject of the next sermon, *I am the true vine*, &c. it is probable he was in the mount of Olives among the vines when he spake that parable, it being his manner to preach from such objects as were at hand. Here also he delivered the discourse and prayer recorded John xvi. xvii. Accordingly, when he prayed, chap. xvii. 1. it is said, *That he lifted up his eyes to heaven*, a circumstance which seems to imply, that he was then in the open air. His coming down from the mount of Olives is expressed indeed by the word ἐξελθε, John xviii. 1. which has led most readers to imagine, that by some accident or other they were hindered from leaving the house till then, notwithstanding Jesus had ordered them to arise and go away with him, before he preached the consolatory discourse. But the answer is, that ἐξελθε being a general term, may be applied with propriety to one's going out of an enclosed field or mountain, as well as to his going out of a house. And though Luke seems to connect what happened in the mountain with the transactions in the garden. xxii. 39, 40, 41. omitting their going to Gethsemane from the mountain, it should be considered that Matthew and Mark mention it particularly; and that the difficulty arising from Luke's connection is no greater, on supposition that Gethsemane was in the valley at the foot of the mountain, than on supposition that it was in the mountain itself. The truth is, there are many instances of this kind of connection to be met with in the gospels. It may be allowed then, that Jesus came down from the mount of Olives with his disciples, crossed the brook Cedron which ran through the valley, and so entered the garden of Gethsemane, which therefore lay between the brook Cedron and the city. Probably it belonged to some of the country seats wherewith the fields around the metropolis were beautified.



to be sore amazed, (*Matt. to be sorrowful*) and to be very heavy. 34. *And saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death ; tarry ye here, and watch* (*Matt. with me*). The sufferings he was about to undergo were so great, that the prospect of them terrified him, and made him cry out in the doleful manner mentioned. For it was on this occasion that he sustained those grievous sorrows in his soul, by which, as well as by his dying on the cross, he became a sin-offering, and accomplished the redemption of men. Luke xxii. 41. *And* (*Mark, he went forward a little*) *he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast*. His human nature being now burdened beyond measure, he found it necessary to retire, and pray that if it was possible, or consistent with the salvation of the world, he might be delivered from the sufferings which were then lying on him. For that it was not the fear of dying on the cross which made him speak and pray in the manner here related, is evident from this, that to suppose it would be to degrade our Lord's character infinitely. Make his sufferings as terrible as possible ; clothe them with all the aggravating circumstances imaginable ; yet if no more is included in them but the pains of death, for Jesus, whose human nature was strengthened far beyond the natural pitch by its union with the divine, to have shrunk at the prospect of them, would shew a weakness which many of his followers were strangers to, encountering more terrible deaths without the least emotion. See on Matt. xxvii. 46. § 147.—*and kneeled down*, (*Matt. fell on his face, Mark, fell on the ground*) *and prayed* (*Mark, that if it were possible the hour might pass from him*). 42. *Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me*. In the Greek it is, "O that thou wouldst remove this cup from me !" For *as* here is a particle of wishing. Matthew says, *he fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me*. (*Mark, and he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee, take away this cup from me*.) He first kneeled and prayed, as Luke tells us ; then, in the vehemence of his earnestness, he fell on his face, and spake the words recorded by Matthew and Mark. In the mean time his prayer, though most fervent, was accompanied with due expressions of resignation ; for he immediately added, Matt. xxvi. 39. *Nevertheless, not as* (*Mark, what*) *I will, but as* (*Mark, what*) *thou wilt* (*Luke, not my will but thine be done*). Having thus prayed, he returned to his disciples, and finding them asleep, he reproved Peter in particular, Mark xiv. 37. *And he cometh and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou ? couldst not thou* (*Matt. ye*) *watch one hour ? Thou who so lately boastedst of thy courage and constancy in my service, couldst thou not keep thyself awake for one hour, to give me notice of the approach of mine enemies ?* 38. *Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.*



In his greatest distresses he never lost concern for the welfare of his disciples. Nor on those occasions was he put out of temper by the offences which they committed through the frailty of human weakness; he was rather disposed to make excuses for them: *The spirit truly is ready, (Matt. willing) but the flesh is weak.* I am sensible that you have sufficient willingness to stand by me in my straits; I believe the profession you lately made of your attachment to me; but I know the infirmity of human nature. Wherefore I advise you *to watch*; to keep yourselves awake, performing the office for which I placed you there. Nor need you be unemployed while you thus keep yourselves awake. The temptations to which you are exposed are great, and your strength to resist them is but small; spend your time, therefore, in praying that you may not enter into them. From the disciples falling asleep while our Lord was away, as well as from his retiring to pray, it would appear that he spent some time in his addresses. The sorrows of our Lord's soul still continuing, he went and prayed a second time to the same purpose. Matt. xxvi. 42. *He went away again the second time, and prayed, (Mark, and spake the same words) saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.* 43. *And he came and found them asleep again; for their eyes were heavy.* Mark xii. 49. *Neither wist they what to answer him.* He returned thus frequently to his disciples, that by reading his distress in his countenance and gesture, they might be witnesses of his passion. Our Lord's pains on this occasion were intense beyond expression; for he went away the third time to pray. And notwithstanding an angel was sent from heaven, who strengthened him, they threw him into an agony; upon which he prayed more earnestly. Yet the sense of his sufferings increased; for they strained his whole body to such a degree, that his blood was pressed through the pores of his skin along with his sweat, and fell down in great drops on the ground. Matt. xxvi. 44. *And he left them, and went away again.* Luke xxii. 43. *And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.* Perhaps in this suffering the divine nature had withdrawn its usual support. 44. *And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly: (Matt. prayed the third time, saying the same words) And* \* *his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the*

\* Luke 44. *His sweat was as it were great drops of blood, &c.*] Some have taken this expression in a metaphorical sense; fancying, that as those who weep bitterly are said to weep blood, so they may be said to sweat blood, who sweat excessively, by reason of hard labour, or acute pain. But others more justly affirm, that our Lord's sweat was really mixed with blood to such a degree, that its colour and consistency was as if it had been wholly blood. For the Greek particle *ὡς* not always denotes similitude, but sometimes reality. Thus, John i. 14. *ὡς πορνείας καὶ ἀγαπᾶται, as the evil begotten*



*the ground.* Thus Jesus suffered unspeakable sorrows in his soul, as long as the divine wisdom saw fit. At length he obtained relief, being heard on account of his perfect submission to the will of God. 45. *And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow.* This circumstance shews how much the disciples were affected with their Master's sufferings. The sensations of grief which they felt at the sight of his distress, so overpowered them, that they sank into sleep. Matt. xxvi. 45. *Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, sleep on now. and take your rest.* This sentence may be read interrogatively, (see Mill on Mark xiv. 41.) *Do ye sleep still, and take your rest?* (so will agree with Luke xxii. 46. *And he said unto them, Why sleep ye? Behold the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.*) 46. *Rise, (Luke, and pray, lest ye enter into temptation) let us be going; behold he is at hand that doth betray me.* This circumstance shews, that though our Lord had placed his three disciples at the garden door, and ordered them to watch the approach of the traitor, it was not because he needed any premonition of his coming. He knew the precise moment, and gave his disciples notice of it. But it was to put to the trial their constancy and vigilance in his service, of which lately they had made such boasts.

*begotten of the Father.* See Matt. xiv. 5. Grotius espoused the metaphorical meaning of this passage. But Bartholinus de Cruce, pag. 184. 193. disputes against him, and gives examples of sweats that have actually been mixed with blood. See likewise Maldonat. in Matt. xxvi. 37. However, that which puts the possibility of this matter beyond all doubt, is a fact well known in history, viz. that Charles IX. of France died of a malady, in which his blood gushed out of all the pores of his body. Voltaire-Univers. Hist. chap. 141. describes it thus. "Charles IX. died in his five and twentieth year. The malady he died of was very extraordinary: The blood gushed out of all his pores. This accident, of which there are some instances, was owing either to excessive fear, to violent passion, or to a warm and melancholy constitution."

§ CXXXV. *Jesus is apprehended. He restores Malchus' ear.*  
Matt. xxvi. 47,---57. Mark xiv. 43,---53. Luke xxii. 47,---54. John xviii. 2,---14.

JOHN xviii. 2. *And Judas also which betrayed him knew the place; for Jesus oft-times resorted thither with his disciples; namely, for the sake of retirement and devotion.* It seems the owner of this garden was our Lord's acquaintance, perhaps his disciple, and had allowed him the free use of it whenever he had a mind. 3. *Judas then \* having received a band of men* (Mark, a

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\* John 3. *Having received a band.*] This band consisted of Roman soldiers; for both its name, (*σπαρά*) a cohort, and the title of its commander, (*χαλμαρχος*, John xviii. 3. 11.) *Cibiliaris*, answering to our *Colonel*, are Roman military terms. See the writers of antiquities.



great multitude) and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, (Matt. and elders of the people) come thither with lanterns, and torches, and weapons, (Matt. swords and staves). The chief priests and elders being informed by Judas that the proper time of apprehending his Master was come, sent a band of soldiers along with him, and servants (*υπηρετας*) carrying lanterns and torches to shew them the way; because, though it was always full moon at the passover, the sky was dark by reason of the clouds, and the place whither they were going was shaded with trees. At the same time a deputation of their number accompanied the band, to see that every one did his duty, Luke xxii. 52. for they were exceeding anxious to get Jesus into their hands. Matt. xxvi. 48. *Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he, hold him fast, (Mark, and lead him away safely).* The soldiers having perhaps never seen Jesus before, Judas found it necessary to point him out to them by some such sign as this. Luke indeed seems to say, that he went before them at a little distance. Luke xxii. 47. *And while he yet spake, behold, a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him.* In this Luke is not contradicted by the other evangelists. Mark xiv. 45. *And as soon as he was come, he goeth straightway to him, and said, Master, Master, (Matt. Hail, Master) and kissed him.* Besides, John's account cannot be understood on any other supposition. For he tells us, that after Judas was come up with the soldiers, Jesus went out of the garden, and asked them who it was they were seeking? and that they answered, Jesus of Nazareth, John xviii. 4, 5. It seems they were at a loss to know him, which they could not have been had they seen Judas kiss him. The kiss, therefore, must have been given in the garden before the band came up. Their agreement about the sign is not inconsistent with this supposition. For that confusion which commonly attends the commission of evil actions, might hinder Judas from giving the sign at the proper season. He went before the soldiers, on pretence that he would lead them to the place, and shew them the man by kissing him. However, to hide his villany from his Master and the disciples, he walked as fast as he could, and without waiting for the band, went up directly and saluted him; feigning, perhaps, to apprise him of his danger. But Jesus let him know that he was not ignorant of the meaning of his salutation. Matt. xxvi. 50. *And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come?* Luke xxii. 48. *Betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss? Art thou so vile a hypocrite, as to betray thy Lord and Master by that which all men use as the symbol either of love or homage, making it the signal of thy treachery?* Judas, however, concealed his purpose so well from the disciples, that Peter did not suspect him,



him, else it is more than probable that he would have struck at him rather than at Malchus. The appointed time of our Lord's sufferings being now come, he did not, as formerly, avoid his enemies; but when they told him that they sought Jesus of Nazareth, he replied, *I am he*; and thereby insinuated, that he was willing to put himself into their hands. At the same time, to shew them that they could not apprehend him without his consent, he exerted his divine power, made the whole band to fall back, and threw them down to the ground. John xviii. 4. *Jesus therefore knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?* 5. *They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth.* Jesus saith unto them, *I am he.* And Judas also which betrayed him, stood with them. 6. *As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground.* But the soldiers and the Jews imagining, perhaps, that they had been thrown down by some demon or other, with whom the Jews said he was in confederacy, advanced towards him a second time. 7. *Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye?* And they said, *Jesus of Nazareth.* 8. *Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he*; expressing a second time his willingness to fall into their hands. *If therefore ye seek me, let these go their way*: if you seek me only, let my disciples pass; for the party had surrounded them also. The evangelist observes, that Jesus made this request to the soldiers. 9. *That the saying might be fulfilled which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none.* For as he always proportions the trials of his people to their strength, so here he took care that the disciples should escape the storm, which none but himself could sustain. At length some of the soldiers, more audacious than the rest, rudely caught Jesus, and bound him. Upon which Peter drew his sword, and smote off the ear of the high priest's slave, who probably was shewing greater forwardness than the rest in this business. Matt. xxvi. 50. *Then came they, and laid bands on Jesus, and took him.* Luke xxii. 49. *When they which were about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword?* 50. *And one of them (Matt. which were with Jesus, stretched out his hand, and drew his sword. John, Simon Peter having a sword, drew it, and) smote the servant (δουλος, slave) of the high priest, and cut off his right ear.* John xviii. 10. *The servant's name was Malchus.* The enraged apostle was on the point of singly attacking the whole band, when Jesus ordered him to sheath his sword, telling him, that his unseasonable and imprudent defence might prove the occasion of his destruction; or rather, as Grotius interprets it, that there was no need of fighting in his defence, because God was to punish the Jews for putting him to death. Matt. xxvi. 52. *Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place; for all they*



*they that take the sword, shall perish with the sword.* See Rev. xiii. 10. where this very expression is used, in predicting the destruction of the persecutors of true Christians. He told him likewise, that it implied both a distrust of the divine providence, which can always employ a variety of means for the safety of good men, and gross ignorance of the Scriptures. 53. *Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?* 54. *But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?* The legion was a Roman military term, being the name which they gave to a body of five or six thousand soldiers. Wherefore, in regard that the band which now surrounded them was a Roman cohort, our Lord might make use of this term by way of contrast, to shew what an inconsiderable thing the cohort was, in comparison of the force he could summon to his assistance; more than twelve legions, not of soldiers, but of angels! Jesus prevented any bad consequences which might have flowed from Peter's rashness, by adding, in his rebuke to him, a declaration of his willingness to suffer. John xviii. 11. *The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?* Then turning to the band, he addressed them; perhaps some of them were holding him. Luke xxii. 51. *And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far; let me go to the wounded man. And he touched his ear, and healed him.* The circumstance of his healing Malchus' ear by touching it, seems to imply, that he created a new one in the place of that which was cut off. Or though he performed the cure any other way, he equally demonstrated both his goodness and power. No wound or distemper whatever was incurable in the hand of Jesus, neither was any injury so great that he could not forgive it. It is surprising that this miracle made no impression upon the priests, especially as our Lord put them in mind, at the same time, of his other miracles. 52. *Then (Matt. In that same hour) Jesus said (Mark, answered and said) unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and the elders which were come to him: they had kept at a distance during the scuffle, but drew near when they understood that Jesus was taken: Be ye come out as against a thief, with swords and staves? (Matt. Mark, to take me?)* 53. *When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me; but this is your hour, and the hour of the power of darkness.* Mark xiv. 49. *But the Scriptures must be fulfilled.* Matt. xxvi. 56. *But all this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.* It seems they were proof against all conviction, being obstinately bent on putting him to death. When the disciples saw their Master in the hands of his enemies, they all forsook him and fled, according to his prediction, notwithstanding they might have followed him with safety, as the priests had no design against them. Matt. xxvi. 56. *Then*



*all the disciples forsook him and fled.* After the disciples were fled, John xviii. 12. *Then the band, and the captain, and officers of the Jews* (*παῖδες τοῦ Ἰουδαίου*, the servants of the priests, &c.) *took Jesus, and bound him.* However, it was not the cord that held him; his immense charity was by far a stronger band. He could have stricken them all dead, with as much ease as he had before thrown them on the ground. Nevertheless he patiently submitted to this, and to every other indignity which they pleased to put on him; so meek was he under the greatest injuries. John xviii. 13. *And led him away* Mark xiv. 51. *And there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and the young men laid hold on him.* 52 *And he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked* Perhaps this was the proprietor of the garden, who being awakened with the noise, came out with the linen cloth in which he had been lying, cast around his naked body, and having a respect for Jesus, followed him, forgetting the dress he was in. John xviii. 13. *And led him away to Annas first* (for he was father in law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year). Annas having himself discharged the office of high priest, was a person of distinguished character, which, together with his relation to the high priest, made him worthy of the respect they now put upon him. But he refused singly to meddle in the affair. They carried Jesus away therefore to Caiaphas, at whose palace the chief priests, elders, and scribes, were assembled, having staid there all night, waiting to see the issue of their stratagem. Matt. xxvi. 57. *And they that laid hold on Jesus, led him away to Caiaphas the high priest.* (Luke, *the high priest's house*). Mark xiv. 53. *And with him were assembled all the chief priests, and the elders, and the scribes.* John xvii. 14. *Now Caiaphas was he which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.* (See on John xi. 50. § 100.) This Caiaphas was he who advised the council to put Jesus to death, though innocent, for the safety of the nation. He seems to have enjoyed the sacerdotal dignity during the whole course of Pilate's government in Judea; for he was advanced by Valerius Gratus, Pilate's predecessor, and was divested of it by Vitellius, governor of Syria, after he deposed Pilate from his procuratorship.

§ CXXXVI. *Peter denies his Master.* Matt. xxvi. 58. xxvi. 69, —75. Mark xiv. 54. xiv. 66,—72. Luke xxii. 55,---65. John xviii. 15,---18. xviii. 25,---27.

OUR Lord's trial in the high priest's palace, and Peter's denying him, being contemporary events, might be related the one before the other, according to the historian's pleasure. Matthew and Mark describe the trial first, because it is the principal fact; but Luke brings it in after the denials. John has preserved the exact



exact neutral order here, for he begins with the first denial, because it happened immediately after Peter entered the palace; then gives the history of the trial, as the principal fact; and concludes with the subsequent denials. But though this be the natural order, I have, in explaining this passage of the history, followed Luke, because by viewing the denials together, the reader can form a better notion of them.

The apostles no doubt were in great consternation when their Master was apprehended, as appears from their forsaking him and fleeing. Some of them, however, recovering out of the panic that had seized them, followed the band at a distance, to see what the end would be. Of this number was Peter, and another disciple whom John has mentioned without giving his name, and who therefore is generally supposed to have been John himself\*, it being the manner of this evangelist to speak of himself in the third person. See chap. xiii. 23. xxi. 20. This disciple, whoever he was, being acquainted at the high priest's, got admittance first for himself, then for Peter who had come along with him. John xviii. 15. *And Simon Peter followed Jesus, (Matt. Mark, as far off, even unto the high priest's palace) and so did another disciple. That disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest.* 16 *But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter* Luke xxii. 55. *And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, Peter sat down among them.* Matt. xxvi. 58. *Sat (Mark, and warmed himself at the fire) with the servants to see the end.* But the maid who kept the door, concluding that Peter was a disciple also, followed him after a little to the fire, and looking earnestly at him, charged him with being a disciple of Jesus.

\* Grotius is of opinion, that the disciple above mentioned was none of the twelve, but rather an inhabitant of Jerusalem; possibly the person at whose house our Lord ate the passover. Whitby likewise thinks it was not John. These authors found their opinion on this circumstance: that the twelve being Galileans, and men of mean station, could not any of them be so well acquainted in the high priest's family, as to procure admittance for a friend at a time when there was such ado there. Lampe therefore has delivered it as his opinion, that the disciple who brought in Peter was Judas. Nevertheless, the common opinion may still be adhered to. For though John was a Galilean, and a person in mean station, there is neither impossibility nor improbability in the notion, that he may have had a relation, friend, or acquaintance, in the station of a servant at the high priest's, who might not only give him admittance, but at his desire admit Peter also. Farther, when we consider that John was to write an history of Christ's life, it will appear extremely proper, that in the course of providence he should have an opportunity afforded him of being an eye-witness of our Lord's trial before the council.



Jesus. Mark xiv. 66. \* *And as Peter was beneath* (Matt. without) *in the palace, there cometh one of the maids of the high priest.* 67. *And when she saw Peter, warming himself, she looked upon him* (Luke, earnestly) John tells us, that the maid who attacked Peter was the damiel who kept the door. It seems after having admitted him, she followed him to the fire, and spake to him in an angry tone; having been informed that it was he who had cut off her fellow servant's ear, verse 26. John xviii. 17. *Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter, Art not thou also one of this man's disciples?* Matt. xxvi. 69. *Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee.* She meant when he was apprehended. This blunt attack threw Peter into such confusion, that he flatly denied his having any thing to do with Jesus. John xviii. 17. *He saith, I am not:* Matt. xxvi. 70. *He denied before them all:* Luke xxii. 27. *Saying, Woman, I know him not.* Moreover, he added, as Mark informs us, xiv. 68. *I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest:* I do not understand any reason for your asking such a question. The apostle who had formerly acknowledged his Master to be Messiah, who was honoured with the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and who had most confidently bragged of fortitude and firm attachment to him in the greatest dangers,

\* Mark 66. *And as Peter was beneath, &c* ] Matthew and Mark seem to differ in the account which they give of the place where Peter first denied his Master. Matthew's words are, xxvi. 69. "Now Peter sat without in the palace, and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee;" namely, when he was apprehended. Mark says this denial happened, xiv. 66. "As Peter was beneath in the palace." To reconcile this difference, Lamy supposes that the high priest's palace was built so as to form a court; that the fire at which the servants sat was lighted in the court; and that Jesus was examined in the vestibule, or porch, called by Matthew *πυλῶν*, and by Mark *προαυλίου*. According to these suppositions, he thinks persons in the court might be said to have been (*ἐξω*) *without in the palace*; that is, without, in respect of the covered buildings; and (*κατω*) *beneath in the palace*, with respect to the porch or vestibule, which was higher than the level of the court. But it appears from John xvi. 25. that Peter was with the servants at the fire, when he denied his Master the third time; and from Luke xxii. 61. that Jesus looked upon Peter just as he was pronouncing the words of the third denial. Our Lord, therefore, and his disciple, were not the one in the court and the other in the vestibule of the palace during his trial, as Lamy supposes, but they were together in one room. Jesus with his judges at the upper end of it, and Peter with the servants at the fire in the other. According to this disposition, Peter might be said to have been without in the hall, that is, without, in relation to the crowd of judges, witnesses, and soldiers around Jesus; but in relation to the place where the council sat, he was beneath in the hall; a way of speaking common even in our own language. Farther, John, ver. 18. says that Peter, after the first denial, stood with the officers at the fire; whereas Matthew and Luke tell us, when he first denied his Master he sat by the fire. It seems the maid's words had put him into such confusion, that before he answered her, he arose from the seat which the servants had given him on his first coming in.



dangers, proved an arrant coward upon trial. His cowardice was altogether inexcusable, as the enemy who had attacked him was one of the weaker sex ; and though she seemed to say, that she knew he had wounded Malchus, yet as Jesus had healed him, and the maid insinuated that John too was known to be Christ's disciple, Peter ought to have behaved with more resolution. *Art thou not also one of this man's disciples ? Art thou not one of them as well as he who stands there beside thee ?* The truth is, equivocation, mental reservation, and such like base arts, are below the dignity and courage of reasonable creatures ; but downright lying, such as Peter was guilty of on this occasion, is abominable, and can only be accounted for by the panic which had seized him. John xviii. 18. *And the servants and officers (οἱ δούλοι καὶ οἱ παραστάται) stood there, who had made a fire, (for it was cold) and they warmed themselves, and Peter stood with them and warmed himself.* After Peter had thus denied his Master, he stood a little while at the fire.

And now fearing that his inward perturbation did appear in his countenance, he went out into the porch ; but he could as little be concealed there. Mark xiv. 68. *And he went out into the porch ;* (see Antiquities, Disc. iv. p. 134.) *and the cock crew ;* namely, for the first time. 69. \* *And a maid (Matt. another maid) saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, This is one of them.* Matt. xxvi. 72. *And again he denied with an oath. I do not know the man ;* adding perjury to lying. The maid having left Peter, he was accosted by a man who affirmed that he was one of Jesus's disciples ; but he denied as before. Luke xxii. 58. *And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not.*

After Peter had been thus attacked without doors, he thought proper to return and mix with the crowd at the fire. John xviii. 25 *And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself.* From this circumstance it is plain, that John is now about to speak of the third denial, and that Peter growing cold had left the porch, where Matthew and Mark tell us the second denial happened, and was come again into the hall to warm himself at the fire. This is confirmed likewise by Luke, verses 61, 62. and by Matthew, in the end of verse 75. John xviii. 25. *And they said therefore unto him, Art thou not also one of his disciples ? He denied*

\* Mark 69. *A maid saw him, &c* ] Matthew and Mark say it was a woman that attacked Peter in the porch, Luke says it was a man. And Grotius, to reconcile the evangelists, has shewed that the Greek word *αἰσχροπρεπής* signifies both *man* and *woman*, as *homo* does in the Latin. But without having recourse to this criticism, it is natural and easy to suppose, that the apostle was accosted in the porch both by a woman and a man, the former mentioned by Matthew and Mark, and the latter by Luke,



nied it, and said, *I am not.* 26. *One of the servants of the high priest (being his kinsman whose ear Peter had cut off) saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with him?* 27 *Peter then denied again, and immediately the cock crew* The words of Malchus' kinsman bringing to Peter's remembrance what he had done to that slave, threw him into such a panic, that when those who stood by repeated the charge, he impudently denied it. Mark xiv. 70. *And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art one of them; for thou art a Galilean, and thy speech agreeth thereto, (Matt. bewrayeth thee).* Luke xxii. 59. *And about the space of an hour after, another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this fellow also was one of them, for he is a Galilean.* When the servants at the fire heard Peter deny the charge which John has mentioned, they drew near, and supported it by an argument drawn from the accent with which he had pronounced his answer. Only the person of whom Luke speaks, did not address Peter as the person of whom Mark speaks had done; but after listening a while to Peter's accent, he directed his discourse to the people around, confirming what they had said a while before. Peter being thus pressed on all sides, to give his lie the better colour, he profaned the name of God by swearing, and wished the bitterest curses on himself if he was telling a falsehood. Perhaps he hoped by these acts of impiety, to convince them effectually that he was not the disciple of the holy Jesus. Mark xiv. 71. *But he began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man of whom ye speak.* 72. *And (Luke, immediately while he yet spake) the second time the cock crew\*.* Thus the

\* Mark 72. *The cock crew.*] All the evangelists say that the cock crew immediately after Peter pronounced the words of the third denial which they themselves have related. But upon comparing the things said when this third attack was made, it appears that the speeches at least which John hath recorded, did not come from the persons mentioned by the other evangelists. Wherefore the third denial was occasioned by different attacks made in succession, as they are placed in this Harmony; unless the men spoke all at once, which is not very probable. It is more natural to think, that when Peter denied his Master to them who first attacked him, the others who stood by supported the charge, with an argument drawn from his accent in speaking, which proved him to be a Galilean. However, as in either case the succession of his answers must have been very quick, the veracity of the evangelists remaineth unshaken, because thus the cock crew immediately after Peter pronounced the words which they have severally related.

To this part of the history it has been objected, that the Jews, as their tradition goes, never kept any cocks within the walls of Jerusalem, and consequently, that Peter could not hear them crow while he was in the high priest's palace. But the objection may be removed, either by calling the tradition itself in question, because it contradicts the testimony of writers whose veracity is indubitable, and who could not but know the customs of the age in which they lived; also because many traditions of this kind were framed by the Rabbis, with a view to magnify the sanctity



the apostle Peter denied his Master three different times, and with oaths, forgetting the vehement protestations he had made a few hours before. He was permitted to fall in this manner, to teach mankind two lessons: first, that whatever a person's attainments may have been formerly, if once he passes the bounds of innocence, he commonly proceeds from bad to worse, one sin naturally drawing on another; for which reason the very least appearances of evil are to be dreaded, and the greatest humility and self-diffidence maintained. In the second place, the goodness wherewith Jesus treated his fallen apostle, teaches us, that no sinner whatever needs to despair of mercy, who truly repents. Luke xii. 61. *And the Lord turned and looked upon Peter; and Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow (Mark, twice) thou shalt deny me thrice.* 62. *And Peter (Mark, when he thought thereon: ἐπιβάλων signifies casting over his veil, or covering his head with his veil) went out and wept bitterly.* Luke alone has preserved the beautiful circumstance of Christ's turning and looking upon Peter. The members of the council who examined Jesus sat in the upper end of the hall; in the other were the servants with Peter at the fire. Wherefore if Christ was placed on some chair, footstool or bench, that his judges, who were many in number, might hear and see him, he could easily look over the heads of those who stood around him, and observe what was doing at the fire; particularly he could see Peter, who was then denying him with imprecations, and in the vehemency of his passion was bawling loud enough to be heard in the upper end of the room. But he had no sooner denied his Master the third time, than the cock crew, and awakened in him the first convictions of his sin; at least it made him look to his Master, in order perhaps to see if he was taking notice of what had happened. But at the same instant, Jesus turning about, fixed his eyes on his cowardly disciple. The look pierced him, and with the crowing of the cock brought his Master's prediction afresh into his mind. He was stung with deep remorse, and being unable to contain himself, he covered his face with his garment, to conceal the confusion he was in, and going out into the porch, wept most bitterly\*.

All

of Jerusalem. Or the objection may be removed by supposing that the Romans who lived in the city, neglecting the institutions of the Jews, might keep this kind of fowl about their houses, perhaps for their table, or for the auspices, a sort of divination they were peculiarly addicted to.

In remembrance of the crowing of the cock, which brought Peter to a sense of the great evil he was guilty of in denying his Master, the practice, it is said, began of placing weather cocks upon towers and steeples.

\* Mark lxxv. xiv 72. *And when he thought thereon he wept.* In the original it is, καὶ ἐπιβάλων, ἐλάλει, which properly signifies, *and throwing his garment*



All this passed while the priests examined Jesus, which is the next particular to be related by the evangelists. But Luke, before he gives an account of it, mentions one remarkable circumstance, *xxii. 63. And the men that held Jesus, mocked him, and smote him. 64. And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, Prophecy, who is he that smote thee? 65. And many other things blasphemously spake they against him.* However, though Luke has told us how Jesus was insulted before he describes his trial, it does not follow that he meant to say he was insulted before his trial. I acknowledge indeed that his judges and their retinue were abundantly capable of being thus unjust and barbarous towards him, even before they made the shew of condemning him. Nevertheless, what Luke has said here does not necessarily oblige us to suppose this. He might conclude his account of Peter's denials, with relating what followed upon our Lord's being condemned, because it happened immediately after the last denial, and to shew what a load of indignity was laid at once on the Son of God. Whilst the most zealous of all Christ's disciples was denying him with oaths and imprecations, the servants and others insulted him in the most barbarous manner.

*garment* (i. e. the veil which the Jewish men used to wear) *over his head, he wept.* For the expression is elliptical, and must be supplied thus, *ἐπιβαλὼν μανίον τῇ κεφαλῇ αὐτοῦ*, as is evident from Lev. xix. 19. LXX. *καὶ μανίον ἐκ δύο ὑφασμένων κίθδλον ἐκ ἐπιβάλλεις σκεῦος.* Besides, it was the custom of persons in confusion to cover their heads. Jer. xiv. 3, 4. "They were ashamed and confounded, and covered their heads."

§ CXXXVII. *Jesus is tried in Jerusalem by the Senate of Jews.* Matt. xxvi. 59,—68. Mark xiv. 55,—65. Luke xxii. 66,—71. John xviii. 19,—24.

WHEN the band of soldiers arrived at the high priest's with Jesus, they found many of the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders, assembled there. (See Mark xiv. 53. § 135.) Some persons of distinction, however, may have been absent, whose coming the rest would wait for. Wherefore, although the soldiers brought Jesus to the high priest's a while after midnight, his trial did not begin till about three in the morning; the intermediate time being spent in procuring witnesses, in sending for the absent members, in gathering the clerks and officers of the court, and in fitting up an apartment for the trial. For that Jesus was tried by the council, not in the temple as many suppose, but in the high priest's palace, is evident from John xviii. 28. where we are told expressly, that they led Jesus from Caiaphas' house to the prætorium. See the note at the end of this section. Luke xxii. 66. *And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people, and the chief priests, and the scribes, came together, and led him into their*



*their council.* The court therefore being duly constituted, and the prisoner placed at the bar, the trial began about break of day. John xviii. 19. *The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine :* He asked him what his disciples were, for what end he had gathered them, whether it was to make himself a king.; and what the doctrine was which he taught them. In these questions there was a great deal of art. For as the crime laid to our Lord's charge was, that he had set himself up for Messiah and deluded the people, they expected he would claim that dignity in their presence, and so without farther trouble they would have condemned him on his own confession. But to oblige a prisoner to confess what might take away his life, being an unjust method of procedure, Jesus complained of it with reason, and bade them prove what they laid to his charge by witnesses. John xviii. 20. *Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world ; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort, and in secret have I said nothing.* 21. *Why askest thou me ? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them ; behold, they know what I said.* It was greatly to the honour of our Lord's character, that all his actions were done in public, under the eye even of his enemies ; because, had he been carrying on any imposture, the lovers of truth and goodness had thus abundant opportunities to have detected him. With propriety, therefore, in this defence, he appealed to that part of his character ; nevertheless his answer was thought disrespectful, for, 22. *When he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by, struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so ?* He meekly replied, 23. *If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil ; shew wherein it lies : but if well, why smitest thou me ?* Thus Jesus became an example of his own precept, (Matt. v. 44.) bearing the greatest injuries with a patience that could not be provoked. (24. *Now Annas had sent him bound to Caiaphas, the high priest.*) The evangelist mentions that Jesus was sent to the high priest, because he had before said, that he was sent first to Annas the high priest's father in law. Moreover, he takes notice that he was sent bound to the high priest, to shew the inhumanity of the officer who struck him in that condition. When the council found that Jesus declined answering the questions whereby they would have drawn from him an acknowledgment of his being the Messiah, they examined many witnesses to prove his having assumed that character. For, by what afterwards happened, it appears that they considered such a pretension as blasphemy in his mouth, who being nothing but a man, as they supposed, could not, without affronting the majesty of God, take the title of God's Son, which of right belonged to Messiah. Matt. xxvi. 59. *Now the chief priests and elders, and all the council, sought false witnesses against*

*Jesus,*



*Jesus, to put him to death.* In examining the witnesses, they acted like interested and enraged persecutors, rather than impartial judges. For they formed their questions after such a manner, as, if possible, to draw from them expressions which they might pervert into suspicions of guilt, whereupon they might condemn Jesus. 60. *But found none. Yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none:* Notwithstanding they were at the utmost pains to procure such a proof as in the eye of the law would justify the sentence they were resolved, at all hazards, to pass upon Jesus, they exerted themselves to no purpose. Because, though they suborned many witnesses, these, in giving their testimony, contradicted one another; a circumstance which the most illiterate person in the court could not but be sensible invalidated their evidence. Mark xiv. 56. *For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together.* Matt. xxvi. *At the last came two false witnesses, 61. And said, this fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, (Mark, this temple that is made with bands) and to build it in three days (Mark, and within three days I will build another made without bands).* Mark xiv. 59. *But neither so did their witness agree together.* As they gave this testimony of their own accord, so it was most false. For Jesus never said he would destroy and build the temple of Jerusalem, as they affirmed. At the first passover indeed, after he had banished the traders out of the temple, the Jews required him to shew by what authority he took upon him to make that reformation; and in answer he referred them to the miracle of his resurrection: "Destroy (said he) this temple," pointing probably to his body, "and I will raise it up in three days." The witnesses, it seems, either through ignorance or malice, perverted his answer into an affirmation that he was able to destroy and build the temple in three days. And the judges reckoned it blasphemy, because it was an effect that could be accomplished by nothing less than divine power. Wherefore these men are justly branded through the world with the name of *false witnesses*, and their testimony was deservedly disregarded by our Lord, especially as they had expressed great ill-will to him in giving it, contrary to all the rules of equity and goodness. *This fellow*, said they, contemptuously, &c. When the high priest found that Jesus took little notice of the things which the witnesses said against him, he fell into a passion, supposing that he intended to put an affront upon the council; for he arose from his seat, which judges seldom do, unless when in some perturbation, and spake to him, desiring him to give the reason of his conduct. Matt. xxvi. 62. *And the high priest arose, (Mark, stood up in the midst) and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee?* 63. *But Jesus held his peace, Mark xiv. 61. and answered nothing.* Upon this, some



some of the council spake to him, Luke xxii. 67. *Saying, Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, you will not believe. 68. And if I also ask you, i. e. propose the proofs of my mission, and require you to give your opinion of them, ye will not answer me, nor let me go.* The high priest, therefore, to cut the trial short and ensnare Jesus, obliged him upon oath to tell, whether or no he was the Christ. Matt. xxvi. 63. *And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us, Whether thou be the Christ the son of God?* (Mark, *Art thou the Christ, the son of \* the Blessed?*) The craft of the question lay in this, that if Jesus answered it in the affirmative, they were ready to condemn him as a blasphemer; but if in the negative, they proposed to punish him as an impostor, who, by accepting the honours and titles of the Messiah from the people, had deceived them. Mark xxiv. 62. *And Jesus said, I am.* Being put upon oath, or, according to Jewish customs, being adjured by the magistrate, he could no longer decline answering. See Lev. v. 1. He therefore confessed the charge, and added, Matt. xxvi. 64. *Nevertheless, (πλὴν, moreover, see Blackwall's Sac. Class. vol. ii. p. 132.) I say unto you, † Hereafter ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, (Luke, of the power of God) and coming in the clouds of heaven: Ye shall see the sign from heaven, which ye have so often demanded in confirmation of my mission. See on Matt. xxiv. 30. § 123. Luke xxii. 70. Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? a number of them cried out together, feigning great astonishment at the blasphemy, as they were pleased to call it, of his answer, and desiring him to repeat it, lest they might have mistaken him. And he said unto them, Ye say that I am.* This, according to the Jewish manner of speaking, was a plain and strong affirmation of the thing expressed. When the high priest heard our Lord's second reply, he solemnly rent his clothes, crying out that he had spoken blasphemy, and appealing to the council: Mark xiv. 63. ‡ *Then the high priest*  
*rent*

\* Mark 61. *The Blessed*] This is a very sublime and emphatical manner of expressing the happiness of God. It conveys such an idea of the divine blessedness, that, comparatively speaking, there is none happy but he.

† Matt. 64. *Hereafter.*] Ἀπ' αὐτοῦ. Heinsius would have these words joined together, so as to make ἀπαυτοῦ, the same with ἀπηγοισμῶς, *ever, plane.*

‡ Mark 63. *Then the high priest rent his clothes.*] Rending of clothes was an expression sometimes of deep grief, sometimes of holy zeal. The precepts, Lev. x. 6. xxi. 10. forbidding the high priest to rend his clothes, relates only to the pontifical garments, and to private mourning, that is, mourning on account of the calamities befalling himself or friends. Griefs of this kind the chief minister of religion was not to make public by any outward sign whatever. But it was neither unlawful nor unusual for him



rent his clothes, and saith, (Matt. *He hath spoken blasphemy*) *What need we any further witnesses?* 64. *Ye have heard the blasphemy.* (Matt. *behold now ye have heard his blasphemy.*) The council replied, As you have justly observed, what need have we of witnesses now, seeing we ourselves have heard in what manner he has blasphemed? Luke xxii. 71. *And they said, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth.* And being asked what punishment he deserved, they answered that he deserved death. Matt. xxvi. 66. *What think ye?* *They answered and said, He is guilty of death.* Mark xiv. 64. *And they all condemned him to be guilty of death:* They condemned him unanimously, excepting Nicodemus, and Joseph of Arimathea, and a few more, who being his disciples (John xii. 42.) would, if they were present, remonstrate no doubt against the iniquity of this sentence. Matt. xxvi. 67. *Then did they spit in his face,* (Mark, *and some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him*) *and buffeted him* (*καταρίζειν* is to strike with the fist) *and others smote him with the palms of their hands* (*επαρίζειν*, from *επίς*, *baculus*, is properly to strike with a staff or stick; but Matthew uses it to signify smiting with the palms of the hands, chap. v. 39.) 68 *Saying, Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, who is he that smote thee?* Mark xiv. 65. *And the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands.* Because Matthew says that they who condemned Jesus spit in his face and buffeted him, and Mark mentions the indignities in particular which the servants put upon him, it appears that he was smitten, blindfolded, and buffeted even by some of the council, who, to ridicule him for having pretended to be the great prophet foretold by Moses, bade him exercise his prophetic gifts in guessing who it was that struck him: *Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, who is he that smote thee?* It was, I think, hardly possible for those miscreants to invent any thing more expressive of the contempt in which they held our Lord's pretensions to be the Messiah.

Thus was the Judge of the world placed at the bar of his own creatures, falsely accused by the witnesses, unjustly condemned by his judges, and barbarously insulted by all. Yet because it was agreeable to the end of his coming, he patiently submitted, though he could with a frown have made his judges, his accusers, and those who had him in custody, all to drop down dead in a moment, or shrivel into nothing\*.

to rend his ordinary garments on account of public calamities, or instances of gross wickedness, as a testimony of his grief for the one, and abhorrence of the other. See 1 Maccab. xi. 71. That the high priest was clothed in ordinary apparel on this occasion, appears from Exod. xxix. 29, 30. where the pontifical garments are ordered to descend from father to son; and therefore were to be worn only at their consecration, and when they ministered.

\* Luke tells us, xxii. 66. that Jesus was placed before the council about break



break of day, *ὡς ἔγιντο ἡμέρας*. If the passover this year fell late in April, the sun must at that season have risen to the inhabitants of Jerusalem about twenty-three minutes after five, and the day have dawned about fifteen minutes after three. Wherefore, since Luke fixes the appearing of Jesus before the council to the dawning, his trial must have begun about three in the morning. This is confirmed by the account which Matthew gives of the hour when Jesus was led away to the governor, xxvii. 1. After having condemned Jesus, the priests consulted among themselves how they might get him put to death. The result of their deliberation was, that he should be loaded with chains as a notorious malefactor, and in that condition carried before the governor, in order to his passing sentence against him. This happened *when the morning was come*, or when it was light. The history given of Peter's denials agrees likewise to these suppositions. For the first denial happened as he followed his Master into the high priest's palace, probably a while before the priests came into the hall, being questioned by the damsel who kept the door, John xviii. 17. Luke says the second denial happened a little while after the first, xxii. 58.; and that between the second and third there passed the space of an hour, perhaps some minutes less; so that the whole was over in little more than an hour. But the third denial is connected with the conclusion of our Lord's trial, John xviii. 27, 28. Wherefore, from his arrival at the palace to his departure, there passed hardly two hours of time. Or we may suppose that he was in the palace much longer; for the words *a little after*, by which Mark connects the second denial with the third, may be interpreted by Luke's *space of an hour*; and almost as much time may be allowed to have passed between the first and second; at least the evangelists have mentioned nothing that is inconsistent with these suppositions. They have indeed fixed the time of Christ's appearing before the council and the governor, but have said nothing of the time of his arrival at the high priest's palace. We may therefore believe that he came a little after midnight; that more than an hour was spent in preparing for the trial; that the judges assembled in the hall half an hour after two; that they spent some time in deliberating what measures they were to follow in the trial; that when all matters were prepared, Jesus was brought in about three; that he continued before the council but a little while, perhaps not above an hour, the trial being cut short by his own declaration; that they carried him away to the governor as soon as it was fully light, perhaps about four, the time which Matthew seems to have fixed. This indeed was much earlier than Pilate was wont to hear causes; but as there was the appearance of a tumult, he thought proper to get up and see what the matter was. When the governor understood that Jesus was a Galilean, he sent him to Herod, who happened then to be in Jerusalem, and perhaps was lodged near the prætorium. Herod soon sent him back without finding him guilty, which confirmed the governor in the opinion he had conceived of his innocence. Wherefore he tried several stratagems to save his life, but to no purpose. At last he brought him out to the people, when it was (John xix. 14.) *ἡγὰρ ἦν ἡμέρα*, about six o'clock in the morning, perhaps half an hour after. It is true, that three hours and a half, the time allotted for our Lord's trials before the council, the governor, and Herod, may seem small, considering the number and nature of the things which happened in the course of those trials. Yet as that time is stated and divided above, it might be sufficient, especially if we add this consideration, that the extreme earnestness of the rulers to get him crucified before the holy convocation came on, would make them hurry every thing with the utmost impetuosity. The reason was, had they suffered this opportunity to pass, they might not soon have obtained another; the governor, by whose sentence alone death could be inflicted, usually leaving Jerusalem immediately after the passover, to go to Cæsarea, the place of his ordinary residence. See the beginning of § 138. See also the note on Mark xv. 25. § 145.



§ CXXXVIII. *Jesus is brought before the governor. Judas hangs himself.* Matt. xxvii. 1,—10. Mark xv. 1. Luke xxiii. 1. John xviii. 28.

THE priests and elders having condemned Jesus for the pretended crime of blasphemy, consulted together again, and resolved to carry him before the governor, loaded with chains, that he likewise might give sentence against him. They could not otherwise accomplish their purpose; the power of life and death being now taken out of their hands. Mark xv. 1. *And straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders (Matt. of the people) and scribes, and the whole council, (Matt. against Jesus to put him to death) and bound Jesus, and carried him away, and delivered him to Pilate (Matt. Pontius Pilate the governor).* John xviii. 28. *Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment, το πραιτωριον, \* the prætorium, the governor's palace.* From the history of the Acts it appears, that the Roman governors of Judea resided commonly at Cesarea, and that there was only an inferior officer in Jerusalem, with a single legion to keep the peace of the city. At the great festivals, however, they came up to prevent or suppress tumults, and to administer justice; for the governors of provinces frequently visited the principal towns under their jurisdiction on this latter account. Accordingly it is insinuated, John xviii. 39. that Pilate was wont to give judgment in Jerusalem at the passovers: "Ye have a custom that I should release unto you one at the passover." Being come, therefore, as usual, a while before the feast, Pilate heard of the stir that was among the rulers, and was informed of the character of the person on whose account it was made, Matt. xxvii. 18. Mark xv. 10. It seems Nicodemus, or Joseph of Arimathea †, or some other friend, had told him of the affair;

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for

\* Properly speaking, the prætorium was that part of the palace where the soldiers kept guard, Mark xv. 16.; but in common language it was applied to the palace in general.

† Joseph of Arimathea seems to have been personally acquainted with Pilate; for after Jesus expired, he went to him and begged leave to bury his body. We can have no doubt of their being acquainted, if Joseph was one of the council who assisted Pilate in managing the affairs of his province, and particularly in judging causes. All governors of provinces had a council of this kind. See Lardn. Cred. book I. chap. ii. § 16. Accordingly we find it mentioned, Acts xxv. 12. by the name of *συμβουλιον*. It is objected, indeed, to Joseph's being a member of Pilate's council, that it was composed of Romans only. Yet even on this supposition he might be a member of it, since he might enjoy the privileges of a citizen as well as the apostle Paul. What other reason can be assigned for his being called *βουλευτης*, Luke xxiii. 50. and *εὐχρημων βουλευτης*, Mark xv. 43. a name not commonly given to the members of the sanhedrim, whose proper title was *ερχοις*. Farther, Luke tells us, xxiii. 51. that Joseph *did not consent to the counsel, βουλη, and deed of them*: he did not agree to the advice which the governor's council gave, when they desired him to gratify the Jews,



for he entertained a just notion of it, "He knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy." He knew the cause of their envy, was impressed with a favourable opinion of Jesus, and wished by all means to acquit him. *And it was early: and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover.* Having purified themselves in order to eat the passover, they would not enter the palace which was the house of a heathen, for fear of contracting such defilement as might have rendered them incapable of eating the paschal supper. See Chronolog. Dissert. VI. They stood, therefore, before the palace waiting for the governor, who on such occasions came out to them. See the beginning of the following section.

And now Judas Iscariot, who, from the motives mentioned above, § 125. had delivered his Master into the hands of the council, finding his project turn out quite otherwise than he expected, was pierced with the deepest remorse on account of what he had done. Therefore, to make some reparation for the injury, he came and confessed his sin openly before the chief priests, scribes and elders, and offered them the money with which they had hired him to commit it, earnestly wishing that they would take it back. It seems he thought this the most public testimony he could possibly give of his Master's innocence, and of his own repentance. Matt. xxvii. 3. *Then Judas which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, 4. Saying, I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood.* But they would not relax their sentence in the least, nor abate the violence of their malicious prosecution; affirming, that notwithstanding he might think the prisoner innocent, and for that reason had sinned in bringing mischief upon him, they were not to blame, because they knew him to be a blasphemer who deserved to die. *And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that.* They would not so much as take back their money from him. When Judas found that he could give his Master no help, his conscience being enraged, griped him harder and lashed him more furiously than before, suggesting thoughts which by turns made the deepest wounds in his soul. His Master's innocence and benevolence, the usefulness of his life, the favours he had received from him, with many other considerations, crowded into his mind, and racked him to such a degree, that his torment became intolerable; he was as if he had been in the suburbs of hell. Wherefore, unable to sustain the misery of those agonizing passions and reflections, he threw down the wages of his iniquity in the temple, probably in the treasury before the Levite porters and others who happened to be there, with a confession of his sin and of his Master's innocence, like  
that



that which he had before made to the priests, then went away in despair and hanged himself, making such an end of a wicked life as the evil dispositions by which it had been governed deserved. 5. \* *And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, † and went and hanged himself.* Thus perished Judas Iscariot the traitor, a miserable example of the fatal influence of covetousness, and a standing monument of the divine vengeance, fit to deter future generations from acting contrary to conscience through love of the world, for which this wretch betrayed his Master, Friend and Saviour, and cast away his own soul. See Matt. xxvi. 24. The thirty pieces of silver which Judas threw down in the temple, were gathered up and delivered to the priests; for they consulted among themselves about the use they were to make of the money, and at length agreed to buy the Potter's field with it, for burying strangers in, whether Jews or Gentiles, who happening to die at Jerusalem had no burial place of their own. But because the deliberation of the priests concerning this matter, and their buying the Potter's field, had an immediate

\* Matt. 5. *And he cast down the pieces of silver, &c.*] Because Judas cast down this money in the temple, it is thought that the council adjourned thither before they carried Jesus to the governor, and that Judas found them there. But they were too much in earnest to delay their revenge one moment. Besides, they had now no time to spend in the temple. See the last note, § 137. He might come to the priests immediately after they had condemned his Master, and while they were yet in the high priest's palace; or he might accost them as they were passing along the street to the prætorium; or he might find them standing before the prætorium, into which they would not enter lest they should be defiled. This latter seems to be the true supposition; for the historian insinuates that Judas addressed the priests after they had carried Jesus to the governor. When they refused the money, he left them, and went to hang himself; but taking the temple in his way, he threw down the whole sum in the treasury, or that part of the women's court where the chests were placed for receiving the offerings of the people who came to worship. See § 132. This money might be gathered up by the Levite porters who always waited at the gates of the temple, 1 Chron. xxvi. and might be carried by them to the priests, with an account how they got it.

† Ibid. *And went and hanged himself.*] Peter seems to give a different account of the traitor's death, Acts i. 18. "Falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out." And to reconcile the two passages, Tobit iii. 10. is adduced to prove, that the word *απρυχάλο*, in Matthew, may signify *suffocation with grief*, in consequence of which a man's bowels may gush out; and instances are cited from Virgil, Ecl. vii. 27.

*Invidia rumpantur ut ilia Codro.*

and from Josephus, Antiq. xv. 13, &c. where one Zenodorus is mentioned, who is supposed to have died in this manner. But as these instances may be otherwise understood, it is more natural to suppose that Judas hanged himself on some tree growing out of a precipice; and that the branch breaking, or the knot of the handkerchief, or whatever else he hanged himself with, opening, he fell down headlong, and dashed himself to pieces, so that his bowels gushed out. Peter's phrase, *ἀνασπασμένος*, *he burst asunder*, favours this conjecture, for *ἀνασπασμένος* signifies properly *lacerato cum strepitu*; and so may imply, that Judas burst asunder by falling from an height,



immediate relation to Judas's treachery, Matthew very fitly takes notice of it here, though the purchase may not have been made for some days, perhaps weeks or months after Judas hanged himself. Matt. xxvii. 6. *And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood.* 7. \* *And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in.* 8. *Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day.* 9. † *(Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did*

\* Ver. 7. *And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field*] Thirty pieces of silver may seem but a small price for a field so near to Jerusalem as this was. Probably the potters, by digging earth out of it for their ware, had made it useless either for tillage or pasture.

† Ver. 9. *Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy, &c.*] How this transaction comes to be connected with a prophecy *spoken* (*εῖρη*) by Jeremiah, is not easily accounted for, as the prophecy cited is found in the writings of Zechariah only. The Syriac version indeed has only, *which was spoken by the prophet*. If this is the genuine lectio, it proves that the name *Jeremiab* was inserted by some officious transcriber.

Or we may suppose with bishop Hall, that in copying, the word *Jeremiab* was put down for *Zecbariab*, a blunder which transcribers might easily commit, especially if the names were written by abbreviation, *Igr* for *Zgr*, as the bishop says he has seen them in some ancient MSS. But if the present reading is retained, we may allow, that as the Jewish scriptures were divided into three parts, the law, the prophets, and the psalms, what was found in the prophets might properly enough be said to be in Jeremiah, if his prophecies stood first in the collection, just as our Lord affirmed, that whatever was in the hagiographa concerning him, was contained in the psalms, because the psalms stood first in that division of the scripture. Or we may adopt the solution offered by Grotius, who observes, that the Jews had many prophecies handed down to them by tradition, such as the prophecy of Enoch, Jude 14, 15. and the traditionary prophecies concerning the destruction of the city, mentioned by Josephus. They had likewise traditionary facts, such as the contest between Michael and Satan about the body of Moses, Jude 9. He observes farther, that the later prophets often allude to and repeat the words of the former. Thus Ezekiel often repeats passages from Jeremiah. Compare Jer. xxxi. 29, 30. Ezek xviii. 23. So likewise John in the Revelations, has several sections from Ezekiel and Daniel. Moreover, Zechariah delights to imitate the phrases of Jeremiah. Compare Zech. i. 4. Jer. xviii. 11. xxxv. 15. also Zech. i. 6. Lam. ii. 17. also Zech. iii. 8. Jer. xxiii. 5. On these accounts, as Grotius informs us, the Jews used to say the spirit of Jeremiah was in Zechariah. He therefore declares it to be his opinion, that the prophecy concerning the thirty pieces of silver, recorded Zech. xi. 12, 13. and which represented symbolically, according to the manner of the prophets, the things that were to befall Messiah, was originally acted and spoken by Jeremiah, as Matthew affirms; but that Zechariah, who in many particulars followed Jeremiah, was directed by the Spirit to repeat it afterwards, and preserve it in writing among his other prophecies: and that the Jews had preserved the knowledge of this fact by tradition; wherefore, though it be now found in Zechariah, being originally spoken by Jeremiah, Matthew has committed no error here in referring it to him.



*did value : 20. And gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me.)* The historian's mentioning the purchase of the Potter's field with the money for which Judas betrayed his Master, being a public appeal to a very public transaction, puts the truth of this part of the history beyond all manner of exception.

§ CXXXIX. *Pilate's first attempt to save Jesus. He refuses to judge him ; and declares him innocent. Matt. xxvii. 11. Mark xv. 2. Luke xxiii. 2,—4. John xviii. 29,—38.*

By the law, Numbers xix. 22. whosoever touched any unclean person, was unclean. For this reason the chief priests and elders, when they came to the prætorium, as we have already seen, John xviii. 28. would not go in, lest the pollutions they might have contracted in the house of a heathen, should render them unfit for eating the passover. See Acts x. 28. The same reason likewise hindered them from going into the prætorium at the other festivals which the governor attended for the sake of administering justice. But to make matters easy, a kind of structure was erected, adjoining to the palace, which served instead of a tribunal or judgment-seat. This structure, from its Hebrew name *Gabbatha*, seems to have been pretty high ; and being called in Greek *Διοστεριον*, John xix. 13. was finely paved with little pieces of marble of divers colours, because it was generally exposed to the weather. Perhaps it was something like a stage, but larger, open on all sides, and covered above, at least when the governor was to hear causes, having a throne placed on it for him to sit on. And as it was joined to the palace wall, there was a door in the wall by which he came out upon it from within. The people, therefore, standing around in the open air, could hear and see the governor when he spake to them from the pavement, without danger of being defiled either by him or by any of his retinue.

Jesus being carried into the palace, and the priests with the multitude having taken their places round the tribunal, the governor came out. John xviii. 29. *Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this man ?* This was the most natural question imaginable for a judge to ask on such an occasion ; nevertheless, the priests thought themselves affronted by it. It seems they knew the governor's sentiments concerning the prisoner, and understood his question as carrying an insinuation along with it, of their having brought one to be condemned, against whom they could find no accusation. Besides, Pilate may have spoken to them with a stern air, so as to signify his displeasure. Hence, 30. *They answered, haughtily, and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee.* John xviii. 31. *Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him and judge him according to your law.* By making



making this offer to them, the governor told them plainly, that, in his opinion, the crime which they laid to their prisoner's charge was not of a capital nature; and that such punishments as they were permitted by Cesar to inflict, might be adequate to any misdemeanor Jesus was chargeable with. But the priests peremptorily refused this proposal, because it condemned the whole of their procedure, and told him that it was not lawful for them to put any man to death; by which they insinuated that the prisoner was guilty of a capital crime, that he deserved the highest punishment, and that none but the governor himself could give judgment in the cause. *The Jews, therefore, said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death.* The evangelist observes, that the Jews were directed thus to speak and act, that there might be an accomplishment of the divine counsels concerning the manner of our Lord's death; of which counsels Jesus himself had given frequent intimations in the course of his ministry. 32. *That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled which he spake, signifying what death he should die.* Thus was the governor's first attempt to save Jesus frustrated. He made four other efforts to the same purpose, but was equally unsuccessful in them all. This good effect, however, has flowed from them: they serve to testify how strongly Pilate was impressed with the conviction of our Lord's innocence, and at the same time they shew to what a height the malice and wickedness of the Jewish great men were risen.

Pilate being obliged to proceed to the trial, the Jews began and accused Jesus of seditious practices, affirming that he had used every method to dissuade the people from paying taxes to Cesar, whose revenue in the province, Pilate, as procurator, was particularly bound to take care of; also that he had affected regal power, under pretence of being their Messiah, in open contempt of the emperor's majesty, and of his governor's authority, who was *Procurator cum potestate*, or chief magistrate in the province. Upon what they founded the calumny of his forbidding the people to pay tribute, is hard to say, unless they put a sinister construction upon the answer which he returned to the Pharisees and Sadducees, who asked his opinion concerning the lawfulness of the taxes, § 117. For though our Lord's meaning was sufficiently plain, as is evident from the effect which his answer had upon the persons who asked him the question, (Matt. xxii. 22.) his words were such as were capable of being perverted. Accordingly his enemies on this occasion, to excite the indignation of the governor against him, joined his pretending to be Messiah with his forbidding the people, as they said, to give tribute, making it the foundation of his prohibition, and from the two joined together, affirmed that he stirred up the nation to rebellion. Luke xxiii. 2. *And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow*



fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cesar, saying, that he himself is Christ, a king : In our court we have convicted this fellow of seditious practices ; for he stirreth up the people to rebel against the Romans, forbidding them to give tribute to the emperor, whose authority he assumes to himself, on pretence that he is king Messiah. But though they spake as if they had tried him upon those articles and convicted him, it was altogether false ; neither offered they any proof in support of what they alleged. The expression used by the Jews in this accusation, viz. " saying that he himself is Christ a king," may no doubt refer to the acknowledgment which Jesus made before the council, of his being Messiah. Nevertheless, to account for Pilate's asking our Lord, whether he assumed the title of the King of the Jews, we must suppose, that the priests explained their accusation by telling him, that Jesus had travelled incessantly through the country, and every where gave himself out for Messiah ; and that even during his trial before them, he had been so presumptuous as to assume that dignity in open court. Without some information of this kind, the governor would hardly have put the question to Jesus, no prisoner being obliged to accuse himself. John xviii. 33. *Then Pilate entered into the judgment-hall again, and called Jesus.* Matt. xxvi. 11. *And Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, saying, Art thou the king of the Jews ? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest ;* that is, according to the Hebrew idiom, " It is as thou sayest." John tells us that our Lord added, *Dost thou ask this question of thine own accord, because thou thinkest that I have affected regal power ; or dost thou ask it according to the information of the priests, who affirm that I have acknowledged myself to be a king ?* John xviii. 34. *Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me ?* No doubt Jesus knew what had happened ; but he spake to the governor after this manner, because being in the palace when the priests accused him, he had not heard what they said. 35. *Pilate answered, Am I a Jew ? Dost thou think that I am acquainted with the religious opinions, expectations, and disputes of the Jews ? Thinkest thou that I have delivered thee unto me, as a seditious person, one that assumes the title of king : what hast thou done to merit the charge of sedition ?* 35. *Jesus answered, Though I have acknowledged to you that I am a king, I am no raiser of sedition, for My kingdom is not of this world : if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews : I would have endeavoured to establish myself on the throne by force of arms, and would have fought against the Jews when they came to apprehend me. But as I have done neither ; on the contrary, as I have hindered one of my disciples from fighting, who sought to rescue me, it is evident*



evident that the kingdom which I claim is not of this world: *but now is my kingdom not from hence.* 37. *Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then?* Art thou a king, notwithstanding thy kingdom is not of this world? *Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king.* (see on Matt. xxvii. 11.) *To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth beareth my voice:* I came into the world for this end, that by explaining and proving the truth, I might impress it upon mens consciences, and make them obedient to its laws. In this consisteth my kingdom, and all the lovers of truth obey me, and are my subjects. This is what Paul calls *the good confession*, which he tells Timothy, 1 Epist. vi. 13. Jesus witnessed before Pontius Pilate. And justly does the apostle term it so. For our Lord did not deny the truth to save his own life, but gave all his followers an example highly worthy of their imitation. It is remarkable that Christ's assuming the title of *King* did not offend the governor in the least, though it was the principal crime laid to his charge. Probably the account he gave of his kingdom and subjects, led Pilate to take him for some stoic philosopher, who pleased himself with the chimerical royalty attributed by his sect to the *sapiens* or *wise man*. See Hor. lib. i. sat. 3. *fine*. Supposing, therefore, that Jesus was a disciple of Zeno, when Pilate heard him speak of truth, and affirm that his kingship consisted in bearing witness to truth, and that every one that loved truth was his subject, he might think that he was claiming the prerogative of the *sapiens*, though in terms somewhat new. Accordingly he desired him to explain what he meant by *truth*? then going out to the multitude, he told them that he found no fault in Jesus, no opinion inconsistent with the good of society, neither any action nor pretension that was criminal in the least degree. John xviii. 38. *Pilate saith unto him, What is truth?* And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, (Luke, to the chief priests and to the people) and saith unto them, *I find in him no fault at all.*

§ CXL. *The governor's second attempt to save Jesus. He sends him to Herod.* Matt. xxvii. 12,—14. Mark xv. 3,—5. Luke xxiii. 5,—12.

THE priests, it seems, were not disconcerted or abashed by the public declaration which the governor, in obedience to conscience and truth, made of the prisoner's innocence; for they persisted in their accusations with more vehemence than before, affirming that he had attempted to raise a sedition in Galilee. Luke xxiii. 5. *And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry. beginning from Galilee to this place.* They artfully mentioned Galilee to inflame Pilate, who they



they knew was prejudiced against the people of that country. See Luke xiii. 1. To this heavy charge Jesus made no answer at all. Nay, he continued mute, notwithstanding the governor expressly required him to speak in his own defence. A conduct so extraordinary, in such circumstances, astonished Pilate exceedingly; for he had good reason to be persuaded of Christ's innocence. The truth is, he was altogether ignorant of the divine counsel by which the whole affair was directed. As for Jesus, he might justly decline making public defences, not from a consciousness of guilt, but lest the common people, moved by what he must have said, should have asked his release, and prevented his death; in which respect he has shewed his followers a noble example of courage. Besides, the gross falsehood of the accusation, known to the chief priests themselves, and to all the inhabitants of Galilee, rendered any reply needless. Mark xv. 3. *And the chief priests (Matt. and elders) accused him of many things; but he answered nothing.* 4. *And Pilate asked him again, saying, Answerest thou nothing? behold how many things they witness against thee, i. e. lay to thy charge.* 5. *But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled (Matt. greatly).* In the mean time, because the priests spake of a sedition in Galilee, Pilate asked if the prisoner came out of that country? and being informed that he did, he ordered him to be carried away immediately to Herod, who was then in Jerusalem. Luke xxiii. 6. *When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the man were a Galilean.* 7. *And as soon as he knew that he belonged unto Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who himself was also at Jerusalem at that time.* Pilate supposed that the prince in whose dominions the sedition was said to have been raised, could be a better judge of the affair than he. Moreover, as he was a Jew, expert in the religion and customs of his country, the governor imagined that he might have had influence with the priests to desist. Or if, at their solicitation, he should condemn Jesus, Pilate thought to escape the guilt and infamy of putting an innocent person to death. He might also propose to regain Herod's friendship, formerly lost perhaps by encroaching on his privileges. But whatever was his motive, the king, who had of a long time desired to see Jesus, rejoiced at this opportunity; for he hoped to have had the pleasure of seeing him work some miracle or other. Nevertheless, because Herod had apostatized from the doctrine of John Baptist, to which he was once a convert, and had put his teacher to death, Jesus, liberal as he was of his miracles to the poor and afflicted, would not work them to gratify the curiosity of a tyrant, nor so much as answer one of his questions, though he proposed many to him. Luke xxiii. 8. *And when Herod saw Jesus he was exceeding glad; for he was desirous to see him of a long season, because he had heard many things of him;*



*him ; (see Luke ix. 7,—9. § 59.) and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him. 9 Then he questioned with him in many words ; but he answered him nothing.* In this our Lord followed the rule observed by God in the administration of his moral government. He bestows on men means, opportunities and assistances, such as, if they improve them properly, will lead them to knowledge and happiness. But these being slighted by men, God, after waiting the determined time, for wise reasons shuts up from them all the springs of grace, and leaves them hopeless of that salvation which they have so long despised. Herod finding himself thus disappointed, ordered Christ to be clothed with an old robe, in colour like those which kings used to wear, and permitted his attendants to insult him, perhaps with an intention to provoke him to work a miracle, though it should have been of a hurtful kind. Our Lord's being dressed in this manner by Herod's order, shews that here the priests had accused him of nothing but of having assumed the titles and honours belonging to Messiah ; for the affront put upon him was plainly in derision of that pretension. The other head of accusation, his having attempted to raise a sedition in Galilee on account of the tribute, they durst not touch upon, because Herod could not fail to know the gross falsehood of it. 10. *And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him. 11. And Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mocked him, \* and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate :* no crime being laid to his charge, the king sent him back to Pilate with an account of his innocence. See ver. 15. p. 756 It seems, though he was displeased with Jesus for refusing to work a miracle before him, he durst not be unjust to him. Perhaps he was restrained by the remorse he felt on account of the Baptist's death. Before this Herod and Pilate had been at enmity between themselves. Probably

\* Luke 11. *And arrayed him in a gorgeous robe* ] The robe in which Herod clothed our Lord, is called *ἰσθητὰ λαμπρὰν*, that is, either *rich* or *white clothing* ; for the epithet *λαμπρὰν* denotes both the quality of a garment, (James ii. 2.) and its colour. White robes, as well as purple, were worn by kings and great men, especially among the Jews. Hence David, describing the flight of the Canaanites, compares the field of battle, and the adjacent country, to mountains covered with snow, on account of the many white upper garments which their kings and generals threw from them, to render their flight more expeditious. Psal. lxxviii. 14. "When the Almighty scattered kings in it, it was white as snow in Salmon." Hence also in the Revelations of John, white robes are given to the saints as the most honourable clothing. For the same reason, in the transfiguration, our Lord's garments became whiter than anything known in nature. So likewise the angels who appeared at his sepulchre in the human form, were clothed in white, John xx. 12. Probably also it is in allusion to the apparel of the Jewish princes, that God himself is represented as appearing in the cloud, and on his throne, in robes white as snow. See *Doughaevs in Analectis*, p. 56.



Probably the latter had encroached upon Herod's jurisdiction, by giving judgment in causes which concerned his subjects. That mentioned, Luke xiii. 1. might be one among other instances. Wherefore, Herod looking upon the sending of Jesus to him to be judged, because he was a Galilean, as a reparation for former offences, was forthwith reconciled to Pilate. 12. *And the same day Herod and Pilate were made friends together; for before they were at enmity between themselves.*

§ CXLI. *Pilate's third attempt to save Jesus. He offers three times to release him. But the people refusing to ask his life, he passes sentence of death upon him, and orders him to be scourged.* Matt. xxvii. 15,---26. Mark xv. 6,---15. Luke xxiii. 13,---25. John xviii. 39,---40. xix. 1.

AT former passovers the governor had courted the favour of the populace, by gratifying them with the pardon of any one prisoner they pleased. Wherefore, when the crowd was gathered, they begged him to do as he had ever done to them. Mark xv. 6. *Now at that feast he released unto them (Matt. the governor was wont to release unto the people) one prisoner, whomsoever they desired.* 7. *And there was one named Barabbas, (Matt. a notable prisoner) which lay bound with them that had made insurrection with him who had committed murder in the insurrection.* (See John xviii. 40. Luke xxiii. 19. 25.) It seems he was the head of the rebels. 8. *And the multitude crying aloud, began to desire him to do as he had ever done unto them.* Pilate, glad of this opportunity, told them it was very true that he had used to do so, and asked them whether they would have Barabbas or Jesus released. But without waiting for an answer, he offered to release Jesus, knowing that the chief priests had delivered him for envy; a sentiment in which he was greatly confirmed by Herod, who had not found him guilty of the things whereof the priests had accused him. Matt. xxvii. 17. *Therefore, when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, John xviii. 39. But ye have a custom that I should release unto you one at the passover. Matt. xxvii. 17. Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ? Mark xv. 9. Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews? 10. (For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy.)* While these things were doing, Pilate received a message from his wife, who happened to be with him in Jerusalem, and who had had a dream that morning about Jesus, that gave her the utmost uneasiness. Perhaps it presaged the vengeance of God pursuing her husband and family, on account of the injustice he was going to commit. But whatever the dream was, it made such an impression on this Roman lady, that she could not be easy till she sent an account of it to her husband, who



who was sitting on the tribunal in the pavement, and begged him to have no hand in the death of the righteous person he was judging. Matt. xxvii. 19. *When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man; for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.* The people had not yet said whether they would have Jesus or Barabbas released to them. Therefore when Pilate received his wife's message, he called the chief priests and the rulers together, and, in the hearing of the multitude, made a speech to them, wherein he gave an account of the examination which Jesus had undergone at his tribunal, and at Herod's, and declared that in both courts the trial had turned out honourably for his character. Wherefore he proposed to them that he should be the object of the people's favour. Luke xxiii. 13. *And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests, and the rulers, and the people, 14. Said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and behold, I having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him; 15. No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him, and lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him, (πιπραγμενον αυτα, is done by him). 16. I will therefore chastise him, and release him. 17. For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast.* Pilate did the priests the honour of desiring to know their inclinations in particular, perhaps with a design to soften them. But he expected that however averse they might be to his proposal, it would have been acceptable to the populace, not doubting but they would embrace the first opportunity of declaring in his favour. Yet he was disappointed. Matt. xxvii. 20. *But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude, (Mark, moved the people: ανηγαγον τον οχλον) that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus.* Luke xxiii. 18. \* *And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this man (και ταυτον, tolle istum in crucem, crucify this fellow) and release unto us Barabbas.* John xviii. 40. *Now Barabbas was a robber, Luke xxiii. 19. who for a certain sedition made in the city, the crime which they falsely accused Jesus of, and for murder, was cast into prison. Thus the Jewish rulers demanded*

\* Luke 18. *And they cried out all at once, &c.]* John says, xviii. 40. *Then cried they all again (παλιν) saying, &c.* But the word παλιν does not imply, that the people had refused Jesus and asked Barabbas before this. The proper meaning of the passage is, that they cried out in opposition to Pilate, who proposed to release Jesus. For παλιν signifies, not only repetition but opposition; contra, e diverso: thus, Matt. iv. 7. "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord;" i. e. it is written on the other hand, in opposition to the text which the tempter had perverted. Παλιν signifies also addition, Matt. v. 33. παλιν ηκουατε, *Moreover ye have heard, &c.* Wherefore the proper translation of John xviii. 40. is, *Then cried they all in return, saying, &c.*



demanded the release of Barabbas, a notorious villain, who had really been guilty of the crime whereof they falsely accused Jesus; had made an insurrection with some accomplices, and committed murder in the insurrection; a crime which, though their impudence exceeded all bounds, they durst not lay to his charge. For this infamous creature the people likewise begged life, preferring him to the Son of God, who had made it his whole study to do them good. Luke xxiii. 20. *Pilate therefore willing to release Jesus, spake again to them* Luke does not tell us what the governor said to the people, but the other evangelists have supplied that defect. Matt. xxvii. 21. *The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you?* He had asked this question before, (Matt. 17.) and repeated it now, not so much for his own information, as to express his surprise at their choice. *They said, Barabbas.* 22. *Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus, which is called Christ?* (Mark, *What will ye then that I shall do unto him whom ye call the King of the Jews?*) Is it possible that you desire me to crucify him whom so many of you have acknowledged as your Messiah? Luke xxiii. 21. *But they (Matt. all) cried, saying, Crucify him. crucify him* Mark xv. 14. *Then Pilate said unto them, (Luke, the third time) Why, what evil hath he done?* Luke xxiii. 22. *I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him and let him go.* Mark xv. 14. *And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him, (Luke, and they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified).* So bent were they to have him killed, that though the governor urged them again and again to desire his release, declaring his innocence, and offered three several times to dismiss him, they would not hear it, uttering their rage sometimes in hollow distant inarticulate murmurs, and sometimes in furious outcries: to such a pitch were their passions raised by the craft of the priests. Pilate, therefore, finding it in vain to struggle with them, called for a basin of water, and washed his hands before the multitude, crying out at the same time, that the prisoner was a good man, and that he was innocent of his blood. Matt. xxvii. 24. *When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying. I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it.* Perhaps Pilate did this agreeably to the rites of heathenism, which prescribed lustrations for such as ignorantly or unwillingly had committed murder. Or rather, as he intended thereby to make an impression on a Jewish mob, he did it in compliance with the institutions of Moses, which by this time he could not be altogether ignorant of, and which, in the case of an unknown murder, ordered the elders of the nearest city to wash their hands publicly, and say, "Our hands have not shed this blood,"



blood," Deut. xxi 6, 7. In allusion to which law the Psalmist says, "I will wash mine hands in innocence," that is, in testimony of mine innocence. Wherefore, according to the Jewish rites, Pilate by this action made the most solemn public declaration that was in his power of Christ's innocence, and of his resolution to have no hand in his death. It would appear that he thought to have terrified the mob; for one of his understanding and education could not but be sensible, that all the water in the universe was not able to wash away the guilt of an unrighteous sentence. Nevertheless, solemn as his declaration was, it had no effect; for the people continued inflexible, crying out with one consent, that they were willing to take the guilt of his death upon themselves, Matt. xxvii. 25. *His blood be on us and on our children*: An imprecation the weight of which lies heavy on the nation to this day! The governor finding by the sound of the cry that it was general, and that the people were fixed in their choice, passed the sentence they desired. Luke xxiii. 24. *And the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed. And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required.* Mark xv. 15. *And so Pilate willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them* Luke xxiii. 25. *And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired.*

The Romans usually scourged the criminals whom they condemned to be crucified. See Jos. Bell. ii. 25. Lucian Revivisc. p. 345. and Elſner in loc. This was the reason that Pilate ordered our Lord to be scourged, before he delivered him to the soldiers to be crucified. John xix. 1. *Then Pilate therefore took Jesus and scourged him.* Matt. xxvii. 26. *And when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified,* (Luke, *delivered Jesus to their will*). Matthew and Mark insinuate, that the scourging was performed on the pavement; for they tell us, that after it was over the soldiers took Jesus into the prætorium, and mocked him. We may therefore suppose that the priests and the multitude required the governor to scourge him openly in their sight; and that he, to pacify them, consented, contrary to his inclination, which, as he believed Jesus to be innocent, must have led him to shew him all the favour in his power.

§ CXLII. *Pilate's fourth attempt to save Jesus. Having suffered him to be scourged and mocked, he shews him to the people, in order to excite their pity.* Matt. xxvii. 27,---30. Mark xv. 16,---19. John xix. 2,---7.

THE soldiers having received orders to crucify Jesus, carried him into the prætorium after they had scourged him. Here they added the shame of disgrace to the bitterness of his punishment; for, fore as he was by reason of the stripes they had laid



on him, they dressed him as a fool, in an old purple robe, (Mark, John) in derision of his being king of the Jews. Then they put a reed into his hand instead of a sceptre; and having made a wreath of thorns, they put it on his head for a crown, forcing it down in such a rude manner, that his temples were torn, and his face besmeared with blood. To the Son of God, in this condition, the rude soldiers bowed the knee, pretending respect, but at the same time gave him severe blows, which drove the prickles of the wreath afresh into his temples, then spit upon him, to express the highest contempt of him. Matt. xxvii. 27. *Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall,* (Mark, *the hall called prætorium* See on John xviii. 28. § 138.) *and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers.* 28 *And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe* (Mark, \* *they clothed him with purple*) 29 *And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him,* (Mark, *worshipped him*) *and mocked him,* (Mark, *and began to salute him*) *saying, Hail, King of the Jews.* 30 *And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head.* John xix. 3. *And they smote him with their bands:* They smote him, some with the reed, and others with their hands. Those who smote him with the reed laid the blows upon the thorns with which his head was crowned; those who smote him with their hands aimed at his cheeks, or some part of his body. The governor, who according to custom was present all the while, found his heart ready to burst with grief. The sight of an innocent and virtuous man treated with such barbarity, raised in him the most painful feelings of pity. And though he had given sentence that it should be as the Jews desired, and had delivered Jesus to the soldiers to be crucified, he thought if he was shewed to the people in that condition, they might yet relent and let him go. With this view, therefore, he resolved to carry him out, a spectacle which might have softened the most envenomed, obdurate, enraged enemies. And that the impression might be the stronger, he went out himself and spake to them. John xix. 4. *Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him.* Though I have sentenced him to die, and have scourged him as one that is to be crucified, I bring him forth to you this once, that I may testify to you again, how fully I am persuaded of his innocence; and that ye may yet have an opportunity to save his life. Upon this Jesus appeared on the pavement, having his face, hair, and shoulders

\* Mark, *They clothed him with purple.*] Matthew calls it a scarlet robe. But the ancients gave the name of purple to all colours that had any mixture of red in them; consequently scarlet itself obtained that name. See Braun de Vestitu Sacerdotum, lib. i. cap. 14.



shoulders all clotted with blood, and the purple robe bedawbed with spittle. 5. *Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe.* But that the sight of Jesus in this distress might make the greater impression on the multitude, Pilate, while he was coming forward, cried, *Behold the man!* As if he had said, Will nothing make you relent? have you no bowels, no feelings of pity? can you bear to see the innocent thus injured? Perhaps also the soldiers were allowed to mock and buffet him anew on the pavement, before the multitude. For though the Jews would not take pity on Jesus as a person unjustly condemned, yet when they saw one of their countrymen insulted by heathens, it was natural for the governor to think that their national pride being provoked, they would have demanded his release out of spite. *And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man.* But all was to no purpose. The priests, whose rage and malice had extinguished not only the sentiments of justice and feelings of pity natural to the human heart, but that love which countrymen bear to one another, no sooner saw Jesus than they began to fear the fickle populace might relent. And therefore, laying decency aside, they led the way to the mob, crying out with all their might, *Crucify him! crucify him!* John xix. 6. *When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him.* The governor, vexed to find the grandees thus obstinately bent on the destruction of a person, from whom they had nothing to fear that was dangerous either to the church or the state, fell into a passion, and told them plainly, that if they would have him crucified, they must do it themselves, because he would not suffer his people to murder a man who was guilty of no crime. *Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him; for I find no fault in him.* But they refused this also, thinking it dishonourable to receive permission to punish one who had been more than once publicly declared innocent by his judge. Besides, they considered with themselves, that the governor afterwards might have called it sedition, as the permission had been extorted from him. Wherefore they told him, that though none of the things alleged against the prisoner were true, he had committed such a crime in presence of the council itself, as by their law (Lev. xxiv 10.) deserved the most ignominious death. He had spoken blasphemy, calling himself the Son of God, a title which no mortal could assume without the highest degree of guilt. 7. *The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die; because he made himself the Son of God.* Though Cesar is our master, he governs us by our own laws. And therefore, since by our law blasphemy merits death, you ought, by all means, to crucify this blasphemer.



{ CXLIII. *Pilate's fifth attempt to save Jesus. He absolutely refuses to condemn him; but yields at last.* John xix. 8,—15.

WHEN Pilate heard that Jesus called himself the Son of God, he was more perplexed than ever. John xix. 8. *When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid.* Knowing the obstinacy of the Jews in all matters of religion, he was afraid they would make a tumult in earnest. Or the meaning may be, that when he heard this account of him, he became more afraid than ever to take his life, because he suspected it might be true. Perhaps he remembered the miracles said to have been performed by Jesus, and began to think that he was really the Son of God. For it is very well known, that the religion which the governor professed, directed him to acknowledge the existence of demi-gods and heroes, or men descended from the gods. Nay, the heathens believed that their gods themselves sometimes appeared on earth in the form of men. Acts xiv. 11, 12. Pilate, therefore, resolving to act cautiously, 9. (*And*) *went again into the judgment-hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? Notus es tu*, that is, of what father art thou sprung, or from what country hast thou come? Art thou from Olympus, the mansion of the gods? *But Jesus gave him no answer*; lest Pilate had reversed his sentence, and absolutely refused to crucify him. The governor, marvelling at his silence, signified that he was displeased with it. 10. *Then Pilate saith unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?* 11. *Jesus answered, Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.* Being sensible that you are Cesar's servant, and accountable to him for your management, I forgive you any injury which, contrary to your inclination, the popular fury constrains you to do unto me. Thou hast thy power *from above*; from the emperor: for which cause the Jewish high priest, who hath put me into thy hands, and by pretending that I am Cesar's enemy, obliges thee to condemn me; or if thou refusest, will accuse thee as negligent of the emperor's interest, he is more to blame than thou. This sweet and modest answer made such an impression on Pilate, that he went out to the people, and declared his resolution of releasing Jesus, whether they would or no. John xix. 12. *And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him.* An inattentive reader may perhaps understand the words last mentioned, as if this was Pilate's first attempt to release Jesus. Nevertheless, they cannot justly be thus interpreted, in regard John himself tells us expressly, that Pilate offered once before to release him, xviii. 39. Besides, the answer of the priests corresponds to the sense I have put upon the passage: *But the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man*



go, thou art not Cesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king, speaketh against Cesar. Finding by what the governor said to them, that he was determined to release Jesus, they told him with an haughty menacing air, that if he released his prisoner who had set himself up for a king, and endeavoured to raise a rebellion in the country, he was not faithful to the emperor; by which they insinuated, that they would accuse him to his master if he did not do his duty. This argument was weighty, and shook Pilate's resolution to the foundation. He was frightened at the very thought of being accused to Tiberius, who in matters of government, as Tacitus and Suetonius testify, was apt to suspect the worst, and always punished the least crimes relative thereto with death. 13 *When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment-seat, in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha.* 14. *And \* it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King.* The governor being thus constrained to yield, contrary to his inclination, was angry with the priests for stirring up the people to such a pitch of madness, and resolved to affront them. He therefore brought Jesus out a second time into the Pavement, wearing the purple robe and crown of thorns, with his hands manacled, and pointing to him, said, *Behold your King*: either in ridicule of the national expectation, or, which is more probable, to shew the Jews how vain the fears were which they pretended to entertain about the emperor's authority in Judea. The person who was the occasion of them. shewing in the whole of his deportment a temper of mind no ways consonant to the ambition which they branded him with. 15 *But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King?* According to most commentators, Pilate said this mocking him. But it is more agreeable to his general behaviour in this affair, to suppose that he spake it with a view to move the populace, who he knew had once held Jesus in great esteem as Messiah. For John tells us, verse 12. that he

now

\* Ver. 14. *It was the preparation of the passover.*] Augustus's rescript to the governors of provinces, preserved by Josephus. Ant. xvi. 10 shews in what manner the Jews computed their preparation for the Sabbath. For among other things it is there ordered, "that the Jews should not be compelled to appear in courts of judicature, either on the Sabbaths, or on the day before the Sabbaths, after the ninth hour in the preparation." The preparation, therefore, began at the ninth hour, or at three o'clock in the afternoon, which is the reason that the Jews were freed from attendance in law-suits then. Nevertheless, the manner in which the rescript is worded, shews that the whole of the day was called the preparation, consequently the evangelist wrote accurately when he tells us, it was the preparation, and about the sixth hour. He means the Roman sixth hour, or our six o'clock in the morning, answering to the first Jewish hour, when Pilate brought Jesus out on the Pavement.



now sought to release him. *The chief priests answered, We have no king but Cesar.* In this reply they publicly renounced their hope of Messiah, which the whole economy of their religion had been calculated to cherish; likewise they acknowledged publicly their subjection to the Romans; and by so doing, condemned themselves when they afterwards rebelled.

The unwillingness which the governor shewed all along to pass the sentence of death upon Jesus, has something very remarkable in it. For by the character which he bears in the Roman history, he seems to have been far from possessing any true principle of virtue. To what then could it be owing, that so wicked a man thus steadily adhered to the cause of innocence, which he defended with an uncommon bravery, till the threatenings of the grandees vanquished him? And when he did yield, taking from our Lord his life, how came he to leave him his innocence? Certainly this can be attributed to no cause whatsoever, but to the secret powerful direction of the providence of God, who intended that at the same time his Son was condemned and executed as a malefactor, his innocence should be made to appear in the most public manner, and by the most authentic evidence; even by the testimony of his judges Herod and Pilate, the latter of whom frequently declared him innocent in the course of his trial. This, I suppose, was the reason also that Pilate's lady had the dream concerning Christ, which she sent her husband the account of; that Judas returned the money to the priests publicly, with an open confession that he had sinned in betraying the innocent blood; that one of the thieves on the cross declared Jesus had done nothing amiss; and that the centurion said he was certainly a righteous person, and even the Son of God.

§ CXLIV. *Jesus is led forth, and crucified with thieves.* Matt. xxvii. 31,—34. Mark xv. 20,—23. Luke xxiii. 26,—34. John xix. 16,—18.

THE governor having now laid aside all thoughts of saving Jesus, gave him up to the will of his enemies, and commanded the soldiers to prepare for his execution. — John xix. 16. *Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified.* The soldiers obeyed, and led Jesus away, after they had clothed him in his own garments. It is not said that they took the crown of thorns off his head. Probably he died wearing it, that the title which was written over him might be the better understood. Mark xv. 20. *And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him.* According to custom, Jesus walked to the place of execution bearing his cross, that is, the transverse beam to which he was to be nailed; the other being at the place already. But the fatigue of the preceding night spent without sleep, the sufferings he



he had undergone in the garden, his having been hurried from place to place, and obliged to stand the whole time of his trials, the want of food and loss of blood which he had sustained, and not his want of courage on this occasion, concurred to make him so faint that he was not long able to bear his cross. The soldiers therefore laid it on one Simon, a native of Cyrene in Egypt, the father of Alexander and Rufus, two noted men among the first Christians, at the time Mark wrote his gospel, and forced him *to bear it after Jesus, (Luke)* or bear it following him. Mark xv. 21. *And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross.* They did this, however, not out of compassion to Jesus, but for fear he had died with fatigue, and by that means eluded his punishment.

As Jesus went along, he was followed by a great crowd, particularly of women, who sighed, shed tears, beat their breasts, and bitterly lamented the severity of his lot. Luke xxiii. 27. *And there followed him a great company of people, and of women which also bewailed and lamented him.* 28. *But Jesus turning unto them said—*Jesus, who ever felt the woes of others more than he did his own, forgetting his distress at the very time that it lay heaviest upon him, turned about, and with a benevolence and tenderness truly divine, said to them, *Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.* 29 *For behold the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck.* 30. *Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us:* The calamities about to fall on you and your children are most terrible, and call for the bitterest lamentations; for in those days of vengeance, you will vehemently wish that you had not given birth to a generation whose wickedness has rendered them objects of the divine wrath, to a degree that never was experienced in the world before. The thoughts of those calamities afflict my soul far more than the feeling of my own sufferings. 31. *For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?* If the Romans are permitted by heaven to inflict such heavy punishments on me who am innocent, how dreadful must the vengeance be which they shall inflict on the nation, whose sins cry aloud to heaven, hastening the pace of the divine judgments, and rendering the perpetrators as fit for punishment as dry wood is for burning! Compare Ezek. xx. 47. with Ezek xxi. 3. where God's *burning every green and every dry tree*, is explained to be his destroying the righteous and the wicked together. See also Psal. i. 3. where a good man is compared to a green tree full of leaves. 32. *And there were also two other malefactors, or rather, "two others who were malefactors, were" led with him to be*  
put



*put to death.* John xix. 17. *And he bearing his cross, went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotba.* The place of execution was called *Golgotba*, or the place of a skull, from the criminals bones which lay scattered there. Here some of Christ's friends offered him a stupifying potion, to render him insensible of the ignominy and pain of his punishment. But he refused it, because he would bear his sufferings, however sharp, not by intoxicating and stupifying himself, but through the strength of patience, fortitude, and faith. Matt. xxvii. 33. *And when they were come unto a place called Golgotba, that is to say, a place of a skull,* 34. *They gave him \* vinegar to drink, mingled with gall, (Mark, they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrb): and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink, (Mark, he received it not).* When Jesus refused the potion, the soldiers, according to custom, stripped him quite naked, and in that condition began to fasten him to the tree. But while they were piercing his hands and his feet with the

\* Matt. 34. *Vinegar to drink, mingled with gall, &c.*] Οξος μετα χολης μεμιγμενον. Mark says, 23. *They gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrb, σμυρνηςμιον οινον.* But the two evangelists speak of the same ingredients. For though Mark terms that wine which Matthew calls vinegar, he may really have meant vinegar, which was a common drink among the ancients, (see Numb. vi. 6.) and such as might very properly be called wine, in regard it was usually made of wine, or of the juice of grapes. Besides, it is well known that the ancients gave the general name of wine to all fermented liquors whatsoever. It is evident, therefore, that to reconcile the evangelists here, we have no occasion for the reading of Beza's copy, which has οινον instead of οξος. As to the other ingredient of this potion, mentioned by the sacred historians, let it be observed, that the word χολη in the LXX. is often used as the translation of the Hebrew word מריר, which properly was the name of a poisonous herb, common in those countries, and remarkable for its bitterness. Hence an infusion of it is called υδωρ πικρον, bitter water, Jer. xxiii. 15 and υδωρ χολης, Jer. viii. 14. ix. 14. Probably it was a weak infusion of this herb in vinegar and water, which our Lord's friends offered him, to make him insensible, and shorten his life. It is called indeed by Mark σμυρνηςμιον οινον, myrrbed vinegar, perhaps because it had myrrh mixed with it; there being nothing more common than for a medicine compounded of many ingredients to take its name from some one of them that is prevalent in the composition. That myrrh was proper in a potion of this kind, has been shewed by Vossius, who proves from Dioscorides, lib. i. c. 70. that frankincense macerated in liquors makes those who drink them mad; and that if the quantity taken be large, it sometimes produces death. Hence, when Ptolemy Philopater designed to engage his elephants, he gave them wine mingled with frankincense to enrage them, 3 Mac. v. 2. Or the evangelists may be reconciled more directly by supposing that χολη signifies any bitter drug whatsoever. For it is applied to wormwood, Prov. v. 4. and by parity of reason may denote myrrb, which has its name from a Hebrew word signifying bitterness. Casaubon has given a third solution of this difficulty. He thinks, that our Lord's friends put a cup of myrrhed wine into the hands of one of the soldiers to give it to Jesus; but that he, out of contempt, added gall to it.



the nails, instead of crying out through the acuteness of his pain, he calmly though fervently prayed for them, and for all who had any hand in his death, beseeching God to forgive them, and excusing them by the only circumstance that could alleviate their guilt---their ignorance. Luke xxiii. 33. *And when they were come to the place which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, i. e. nailed him to his cross; and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left.* 34. *Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.* This was infinite meekness and goodness, truly worthy of God's only begotten Son; an example of forgiveness, which though it never can be equalled by any, is fit to be imitated by all. Dr Heylin (Theolog. Lect. p. 103. at the end of the vol.) has well described our Lord's passion as follows: "The appointed soldiers dig the hole in which the cross was to be erected. The nails, and the hammer are ready. The cross is placed on the ground, and Jesus lies down upon the bed of sorrows. They nail him to it. They erect it. His nerves crack. His blood distils. He hangs upon his wounds," naked, "a spectacle to heaven and earth." Thus was the only begotten Son of God, who came down to save the world, crucified by his own creatures \*. *Hear, O heavens! O earth earth, earth, hear! The Lord hath nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against him.*

\* The ignominy of his punishment may be learned from a heathen: Cic. pro Rabir. "Miseram est ignominia judiciorum publicorum, misera multatio honorum, miserum exilium; sed tamen in omni calamitate retinetur aliquod vestigium libertatis; mors denique si proponitur, in libertate moriamur. Carnifex vero, et obductio capitis, et nomen ipsum crucis, absit non modo a corpore civium Romanorum, sed etiam a cogitatione, oculis, auribus. Harum enim omnium rerum non solum eventus atque perperio, sed etiam conditio, expectatio, mentio denique indigna cive Romano, atque homine libero est." In Verrem, lib. 5. "Facilius est vincere civem Romanum, scelus verberare, prope parricidium necare. Quid dicam in crucem tollere? crudelissimum teterrimumque supplicium: verbo satis digno tam nefaria res appellari nullomodo potest."

§ CXLV. *The title is put on the cross, and lots are cast for Christ's garments.* Matt. xxvii. 35,—38. Mark xv. 24,—28. Luke xxiii. 34. John xix. 19,—24.

As usual, the governor put up a title or writing on the cross, signifying the crime for which Jesus was condemned. This writing was in black characters, on a whitened board, and in the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin languages, that foreigners as well as natives might be able to read it. All the evangelists have given an account of the title; but the words of it are different in each, which may seem strange, considering that it is an inscription they have undertaken to relate; the propriety whereof lieth in the precise words. But the difference may easily have arisen from the

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the languages in which the title was wrote ; for one evangelist may have transcribed the words of the Greek inscription, a second might translate the Hebrew, a third the Latin, and a fourth may have given a different translation of the Hebrew or Latin. Thus the inscription of the title may be exactly given by each of the evangelists, though the words they have mentioned be different, especially as they all agree in the meaning of it : *Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews*. (See Prelim. Observ. I.) When the priests read this title they were exceedingly displeased ; because, as it represented the crime for which Jesus was condemned, it insinuated that he had been acknowledged for Messiah. Besides, being placed over the head of one who was dying by the most infamous punishment, it implied that all who attempted to deliver the Jews should come to the same end. Wherefore, the faith and hope of the nation being thus publicly ridiculed, the priests thought themselves highly affronted, and came to Pilate in great concern, begging that the writing might be altered. But he would not hear them, having intended the affront because they had constrained him to crucify Jesus, contrary both to his judgment and inclination. John xix. 19. *And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS*. (See Matt. xxvii. 37. p. 769. Mark xv. 26. p. 769. Luke xxiii. 38. p. 771.) 20. *This title then read many of the Jews ; for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city : and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin.* 21. *Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews, but that he said, I am King of the Jews.* 22. *Pilate answered, What I have written, I have written.* When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, i. e. erected his cross, they divided his garments, and cast lots for the shares. His coat was excepted out of this division, because being without a seam, they agreed to cast lots for it by itself. The evangelists observe that all this was done agreeably to an ancient prophecy, wherein these circumstances of Messiah's sufferings were mentioned, to shew that he was to be crucified naked, and consequently that he was to suffer a most ignominious, as well as a most painful death. 23. *Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, (and made \*four parts, to every soldier a part) and also his coat :*  
now

\* John 13. *Four parts, &c.*] Because four soldiers only are mentioned in the division of the clothes, it does not follow that there were but four present at the crucifixion. Since soldiers were necessary at all, a great number must have been present to keep off the crowds which press to see such spectacles as near as they can. From Matt. xxvii. 54. it appears, that the soldiers who assisted at the crucifixion were commanded by a centurion. Wherefore, it is more than probable that the whole band, which Matthew tells us expressly was gathered together to scourge Jesus, ver. 27.



now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. (See Jewish Antiq. p. 145.) 24. They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rent it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be. Luke xxiii. 34. And they parted his raiment, (Mark, When they had crucified him they parted his garments) and cast lots, (Mark, casting lots upon them, what every man should take). Matt. xxvii. 35. That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon (John, for) my vesture they did cast lots. John xix. 24. These things therefore the soldiers did. Mark xv. 25. \* And it was the

was present at his execution, especially as two others suffered at the same time. The four soldiers who parted his garments, and cast lots for his vesture, were the four who nailed him to the cross, each of them fixing a limb, and who it seems for this service had a right to the crucified person's clothes.

\* Mark 25. *And it was the third hour, &c.*] The third Jewish hour ended at our nine o'clock in the morning. By Mark's account, therefore, the crucifixion and the lots may have been finished at the striking of eight, when the third Jewish hour, answering to our ninth, began. This indeed seems inconsistent with John xix. 14. who tells us, that when Pilate sat on the judgment seat in the Pavement, and brought Jesus out to the people the last time, it was about the sixth hour, the sixth Roman hour, the same with our six o'clock in the morning. See Prelim. Observ. V. But to reconcile these seemingly opposite accounts, the following series of transactions should be considered. After the governor brought Jesus out, he spake both to the people and to the priests, before he finally condemned him. And though each speech is discussed by the evangelist in a single sentence, they may have been drawn out to some length, that, if possible, an impression might thereby be made on the people. When Jesus was delivered to the soldiers, they had to strip him of the purple robe, and to clothe him in his own garments; the thieves were to be brought out of prison; the necessary preparations for the crucifixion of the three were to be made—in particular, crosses were to be provided; the crimes laid to the charge of the prisoners were to be written on whitened boards with black characters; vinegar with a sponge and a reed was to be got for refreshing the criminals, and keeping them from fainting under their punishment; soldiers were to be appointed for watching the crosses; and these had to provide themselves victuals, because persons sometimes lived on their crosses several days. In travelling from the prætorium, which may have been situated in that quarter of the town which was farthest from the place of execution, they could move but slowly, because Jesus being very much fatigued, must have borne his cross with difficulty. When he grew faint it would be some time before they could find one to assist him in bearing it. And being come to the place of execution, they had the crosses to make ready, by fixing the transverse beams on their proper stalks, the prisoners were to be stripped and nailed, the titles were to be affixed, the holes for the crosses to be dug, the crosses themselves were to be erected and fixed, and, last of all, the prisoners clothes were to be divided by lot. These, with other circumstances unknown to us, accompanying executions of this kind, may be supposed to have filled up the whole space between six in the morning, when the governor shewed Jesus the last time, and the third Jewish hour, when Jesus was crucified; that is to say, a space less than two hours. For about the sixth hour, the expression in John, may signify a while after the striking of six, when the sixth hour



*the third hour, and they crucified him* : or rather, it was the third hour when they crucified him. See an example of this construction, Neh. vii. ult. LXX. or according to some editions, viii. 1. The evangelist means that it was the third Jewish hour when the cross was erected, and the clothes divided ; for he had mentioned our Lord's being nailed to the cross in the precedent verse. Matt. xxvii. 36. *And sitting down, they watched him there* : 37. *And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS.* Mark xv. 26. *And the superscription of his accusation was written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS.* Here Matthew and Mark introduce the affair of the title as if it had happened after the lots ; whereas John expressly affirms, that the title was put on before the lots were cast. But to reconcile the evangelists, we need only give the aorist ~~crucifixus~~ in Matthew, its ordinary plusquamperfect signification thus : *Now they had set up over his head his accusation* : They had set it up before they erected the cross, or immediately after ; for the nature of the thing makes it evident that they must have done it before the soldiers who crucified Jesus parted his raiment, as John tells us, and before they sat down to watch him ; a circumstance mentioned by Matthew himself, before he speaks of the title. Accordingly Mark speaks of it as a thing formerly done : “ And the superscription of his accusation was written over, *THE KING OF THE JEWS.*” Matt. xxvii. 38. *Then were there two thieves crucified with him* : (Mark, *with him they crucify two thieves*) *one on the right hand, and the other on the left.* They placed Jesus in the middle, by way of mock honour, because he had called himself a king, and was now crowned with thorns. Or if the priests had any hand in this, they might design thereby to impress the spectators the more strongly with the thought of his being an impostor, and to make them look on him as the chief malefactor. This passage is reconciled with Luke xxiii. 33. p. 766. by supposing that Luke speaks of the nailing of the three to their crosses, whereas Matthew and Mark speak of the erection of the crosses. Mark xv. 28. *And the Scripture was fulfilled which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors.* In giving the history of our Lord's sufferings, the evangelists make their readers sensible, that all the circumstances of them were fore-ordained of God. Their design was to prevent the offence which might otherwise have been taken at Christ's sufferings.

# § CXLVI.

hour ends ; and *the third hour*, the expression in Mark, answering to the ninth Roman hour, may signify at the beginning thereof, or at the striking of eight, when the eighth hour ends, and the ninth begins.



§ CXLVI. *The mob, the rulers, the priests, the soldiers, and the thieves, revile Jesus.* Matt. xxvii. 39,—44. Mark xv. 29,—32. Luke xxiii. 35,—43.

THE common people, whom the priests had incensed against our Lord by the malicious lies which they spread concerning him, and which they pretended to found on the evidence of the witnesses, seeing him hang as a malefactor on the cross, and reading the superscription that was placed over his head, expressed their indignation against him by railing on him. Mark xv. 29. *And they that passed by railed on him, (Matt. reviled him) wagging their heads, and saying, Ab, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, 30. Save thyself, and (Matt. if thou be the Son of God) come down from the cross.* The rulers having, as they imagined, wholly overturned our Lord's pretensions as Messiah, ridiculed him on that head, and with a meanness of soul which will render them for ever infamous, mocked him while in the agonies of death. Luke xxiii. 35. *And the people stood beholding; and the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others: Matt. xxvii. 42. The chief priests mocking him with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others, himself he cannot save: if he be the king of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, (Mark, let Christ the king of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see his miraculous power) and we will believe him.* They scoffed at the miracles of healing by which he demonstrated himself Messiah, and promised faith on condition he would prove his pretensions by coming down from the cross. In the mean time, nothing could be more false and hypocritical, for they continued in their unbelief, notwithstanding Jesus raised himself from the dead, which was a much greater miracle than his coming down from the cross would have been; a miracle also that was attested by witnesses whose veracity they could not call in question. It was told them by the soldiers whom they had themselves placed at the sepulchre to watch his body. I think it plain therefore, that the priests said they would believe if Jesus came down, not because their incorrigible stubbornness would have yielded to any proof, however convincing, but to insult Christ; fancying it impossible for him now to escape out of their hands. 43. *He trusted in God, let him deliver him now if he will have him, (αβλαει αυτου, if he delights in him) for he said, I am the Son of God.* It is difficult to tell what it was the rulers here alluded to. Perhaps those who now spake were the persons who attended Judas and the armed band when they apprehended Jesus, Luke xxii. 52. On that occasion they had heard him order Peter to put up his sword, telling him, Matt. xxvi. 53. "That he could pray to his Father, and he would give him more than twelve legions of angels." In derision of this expression



expression of his reliance on God, whom he called his Father, they say to him now that he was hanging on the cross, *He trusted in God* that he would deliver him, and claimed a peculiar relation to him as his Son. If God really delights in him as his only Son, *Let him shew it now by delivering him* from this ignominious punishment. But whatever the particular was which they now alluded to, certain it is, that the rulers by speaking as above fulfilled a remarkable prophecy concerning Messiah's sufferings, Plal. xxii. 8. where it is foretold that Messiah's enemies would utter these very words in derision of his pretensions. Luke xxiii. 36 *And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar,* 37. *And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself.* The insult did not lie in their offering our Lord vinegar, for that was the soldiers common drink when mixed with water; but it lay in what they said to him when they offered it, which shewed that they did him the office, not out of compassion, but purely with a view to keep him alive, that they might have the pleasure of seeing him descend from the cross by miracle. Or if they did it from compassion, they accompanied their kindness with a gibe. 38. *And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.* There is no transposition necessary here; for Luke does not tell us when the superscription was written, so far is he from saying that it was written after Jesus was mocked. He only observes in general, that there was a title placed over him, and by mentioning it together with the insults, insinuates that it was one of them. The evangelist John has marked the particular time when the title was written and affixed, xix. 19. Matt. xxvii. 44. *The thieves also which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth,* (Mark, *reviled him*). Luke says that only one of them did so\*. The other exercised a most extraordinary faith † at a time when our

\* Some commentators endeavour to remove this difficulty, by supposing that both the thieves might revile Jesus at first. But this solution is not very probable. In Scripture a single thing is often expressed in the plural number, especially when it is not the speaker's or writer's intention to be more particular. Thus, Judges xii. 7. "Then died Jephtha the Gileadite, and was buried in the cities of Gilead;" that is, in one of the cities of Gilead, as is well supplied by our translators. Thus also, Matt. xxi. 7. "And brought the ass and the colt, and put on them their clothes; and they set him, *ἐκείνῳ αὐτῶν*, upon them," i. e. on one of them. The phrase in Matthew and Mark, supplied after the same manner, will run more easily thus: *And one of the thieves reviled him.* See more examples, Luke xxi. 6. 33. 1 Sam. xviii. 21

† It has generally been thought, that this grace was begun in the thief, and raised to perfection all of a sudden, and on the present occasion too, when every circumstance concurred to hinder him from believing. Yet it is far from being certain, that either his faith or repentance were the fruits



our Lord was deserted by God, mocked by men; and hanged upon a cross as the worst of malefactors. Luke xxiii. 39. *And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.* 40. *But the other answering, rebuked him, saying, Dost thou not fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?* The faith of the penitent thief has something very remarkable in it; for he had conceived just sentiments, both of his own conduct, and of Christ's character. 41. *And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.* Nor is this all; he seems to have entertained a more rational and exalted notion of Messiah's kingdom than the disciples themselves. They expected nothing but a secular empire; he gave strong intimations of his having an idea of Christ's spiritual dominion; for at the very time that Jesus was dying on the cross, he begged to be remembered by him when he came to his kingdom. Luke xxiii. 42. *And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.* It may be said, indeed, that the thief hoped Jesus would exert his miraculous power in delivering himself from the cross, and setting up his kingdom immediately. But even on this supposition, his faith, though not clearer and more extensive, must be praised as stronger than that of the disciples, who because their Master was crucified had almost universally despaired of his being Messiah. However, the thief's acquiescing in the answer which Jesus made to his request, 43. *Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise,* must be acknowledged a presumption in favour of the extensiveness of his faith also \*.

fruits of this particular season. He was acquainted with our Lord's character before he came to punishment, as is plain from the testimony he bore to his innocence, *This man hath done nothing amiss.* He may therefore have often heard our Lord preach in the course of his ministry, and may have seen many of his miracles; and from the consideration of both joined together, may have been solidly convinced that he was Messiah. Nay, it is possible that he may have been a good man, as well as a professed disciple of Christ. For his untimely and misfortunate end might be occasioned by a single act of gross wickedness, of which he sincerely repented, and into which saints themselves may fall, through the strength of temptation, consistently with their being in a state of grace: witness David's adultery and murder. I only say the thing is possible. And if it is possible, those who encourage themselves in sin from this example, as if it was an undoubted instance of a late accepted repentance, proceed upon a supposition the truth of which no man can be certain of; while in the mean time the doctrine built upon it is of such undeniable importance, that it loudly demands the exclusion of every doubt. Besides, this is the only passage in Scripture which can be alleged in favour of a repentance produced and accepted in the article of death; for the parable of the labourers in the vineyard, the other passage usually quoted on this subject, has no relation to it at all. See § 105.

\* When we call to mind the perfect innocence of the Lord Jesus, the uncommon love he bore to mankind, and the many substantial good offices which



which he did to multitudes groaning under the burden of their afflictions; when we think of the esteem in which the common people held him all along, how cheerfully they followed him to the remotest corners of the country, and with what pleasure they heard his discourses; it cannot but be matter of the greatest surprise, to find them at the conclusion rushing all of a sudden into the opposite extremes, and every body as it were combined to treat him with the most barbarous cruelty. When Pilate asked the people if they inclined to have Jesus released, his disciples, though they were very numerous, and might have made a great appearance in his behalf, remained quite silent; the Roman soldiers, notwithstanding their general had declared him an innocent person, most inhumanly insulted him; the Scribes and Pharisees ridiculed him; the common people, who had received him with hosannas a few days before, wagged their heads at him as they passed by, and railed on him as a deceiver; nay, the very thief on the cross reviled him. This sudden revolution in the humours of the nation may seem unaccountable. Yet if we could assign a proper reason for the silence of the disciples, the principles which influenced the rest might be discovered in their several speeches. Christ's followers had attached themselves to him in expectation of being raised to great wealth and power in his kingdom. But seeing no appearance at all of what they looked for, they permitted him to be condemned, perhaps because they thought it would have obliged him to break the Roman yoke by miracle. If the reader can trace out a more probable reason for their silence, when Pilate offered thrice to release their Master, and in a manner begged them to ask his life, his pains in such an inquiry will certainly be well bestowed. With respect to the soldiers, they were angry that any one should have pretended to royalty in Judea, where Cesar had established his authority. Hence they insulted him with the title of king, and paid him mock honours. As for the common people, they seem to have lost their opinion of him, probably because he had neither convinced the council, nor rescued himself when they condemned him. They began therefore to look upon the story that was industriously spread abroad of him, viz. his having boasted that he could destroy and build the temple in three days, as a kind of blasphemy, because it required divine power to execute such an undertaking. Accordingly, in derision they saluted him by the title of *The destroyer and builder of the temple in three days*; and with a malicious sneer bade him save himself, and come down from the cross; insinuating that the one was a much easier matter than the other. The priests and scribes were filled with the most implacable and diabolical hatred of him, because he had torn off their masks, and shewed them to the people in their true colours. Wherefore they ridiculed his miracles, from whence he drew his reputation, as a parcel of tricks, by pretending to acknowledge them, but at the same time adding a reflection which they thought entirely confused them, *He saved others, himself he cannot save*. To conclude, the thief also fancied that he must have delivered both himself and them, if he had been the Messiah. But as no sign of such a deliverance appeared, he upbraided him for making pretensions to that high character, saying, *If thou be Christ, save thyself and us*.

§ CXLVII. *In the time of our Lord's execution a preternatural eclipse happens. He speaks from the cross to his friends. He cites the xxiid Psalm, commends his spirit to God, and expires.* Matt. xxvii. 45,---56. Mark xv. 33,---41. Luke xxiii. 44,---49. John xix. 25,---30.

DURING the last three hours that our Lord hanged on the cross, a darkness covered the face of the earth, to the great terror and amazement



amazement of the people present at his execution. This extraordinary alteration in the face of nature was peculiarly proper whilst the Sun of righteousness was withdrawing his beams from the land of Israel and from the world, not only because it was a miraculous testimony borne by God himself to his innocence, but also because it was a fit emblem of his departure and its effects, at least till his light shone out anew with additional splendour in the ministry of his apostles. The darkness which now covered Judea, together with the neighbouring countries, beginning about noon and continuing till Jesus expired, was not the effect of an ordinary eclipse of the sun; for that can never happen except when the moon is about the change, whereas now it was full moon; not to mention that total darkneses occasioned by eclipses of the sun, never continue above twelve or fifteen minutes. Wherefore it must have been produced by the divine power in a manner we are not able to explain. Accordingly Luke, after relating that there was darkness over all the earth, adds, “And the sun was darkened;” which perhaps may imply, that the darkness of the sun did not occasion, but proceeded from the darkness that was over all the land. Luke xxiii. 44. *And it was about the sixth hour, and* (Matt. *from the sixth hour*, Mark, *when the sixth hour was come*) *there was a darkness over all the earth,* (Matt. Mark, *land*) *until the ninth hour.* 45. *And the sun was darkened.* Farther, the Christian writers, in their most ancient apologies to the heathens, affirm, that as it was full moon at the passover when Christ was crucified, no such eclipse could happen by the course of nature. They observe also, that it was taken notice of as a prodigy by the heathens themselves. To this purpose we have still remaining the words of Phlegon the astronomer and freed-man of Adrian, cited by Origen from his book, at a time when it was in the hands of the Public: Contr. Celsum, p. 83. That heathen author, in treating of the fourth year of the two hundred and second Olympiad, which is the nineteenth of Tiberius, and supposed to be the year in which our Lord was crucified, tells us, “That the greatest eclipse of the sun that ever was known happened then; for the day was so turned into night, that the stars in the heavens were seen.” If Phlegon, as Christians generally suppose, is speaking of the darkness which accompanied our Lord’s crucifixion, it was not circumscribed within the land of Judea, but must have been universal. This many learned men have believed, particularly Huet, Grotius, Guffet, Reland, and Alphen. Josephus, it is true, takes no notice of this wonderful phenomenon; but the reason may be, that he was unwilling to mention any circumstance favourable to Christianity, of which he was no friend. Luke mentions the eclipse immediately after the repentance of the thief, and connects the two in the following manner: “To-day shalt thou be with  
me



me in paradise. And it was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness," &c. Perhaps this connection may imply, that the note of time mentioned must be referred both to the thief and to the eclipse. It was about the sixth hour when the thief expressed his repentance, and at the same time the eclipse came on, about three hours before Jesus expired.

When the darkness began, the disciples would naturally look on it as a prelude to their Master's deliverance. For though the chief priests, elders, and people, in mockery desired him to come down, his friends could not help thinking, that he who had delivered so many from incurable diseases, who had created limbs for the maimed, and eyes for the blind, and had raised the dead to life, might easily save himself, even from the cross. When, therefore, his mother, and his mother's sister, and Mary Magdalene, and the beloved disciple, observed the heavens beginning to grow black, they drew near, probably in expectation that he was going to shake the frame of nature, Hag. ii. 6, 7. and unloose himself from the cross, and take due vengeance on his enemies. John xix. 25. *Now there stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene* Jesus was now in the depth of his own sufferings; yet when he saw his mother and her companions, their grief affected him to a great degree, particularly the distress of his mother. Wherefore, though he was almost at the point of death, he spake a few words, in which he expressed the most affectionate regard both to her and to them. For, that she might have some consolation under the greatness of her sorrows, he told her, the disciple whom he loved, would, for the sake of that love, supply his place to her after he was gone, even the place of a son; so he desired her to consider him as such, and expect from him all the duty of a son. 26 *When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he said unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son.* But our Lord, besides expressing great filial affection towards his mother, gave the beloved disciple also a token of his high esteem. He singled him out, the only one of his friends whom he could trust, as fit to be in his stead to his mother. Accordingly, he desired him expressly to reverence and love her, as if she had been his own parent. This duty the favourite disciple gladly undertook; for he carried her home with him, and maintained her from that time forth, her husband Joseph it seems being dead. 27. *Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother.* And from that hour (time) that disciple took her unto his own home. Thus, in the midst of the heaviest sufferings, that ever human nature sustained, Jesus demonstrated a divine strength of benevolence. Even when his own distress was at the highest pitch, his friends had such a share of his



his concern, that their happiness for a little interrupted the feeling of his pains, and engrossed his thoughts.

A little before he expired, Jesus repeated the first verse of the twenty-second Psalm, pronouncing it in the Syriac dialect, which was the common language of the country, and speaking with a loud voice, that all who stood around might hear him distinctly, and know that he was the person spoken of by David. Matt. xxvii. 46. *And about the ninth hour, (Mark, at the ninth hour) answering to our three in the afternoon, Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, (Mark, Eloi, Eloi) lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Or as others would have it translated, My God, my God, to what a degree, or to what a length of time, hast thou forsaken me! For lamma in the Hebrew has this signification. Accordingly Mark, in the parallel passage, has rendered it by *εὐς τι*. Either way translated, our Lord's words must be viewed in the same light with his prayer in the garden. For as that prayer expressed only the feelings and inclinations of his human nature, sorely pressed down with the weight of his sufferings, so his words on the cross proceeded from the greatness of his sufferings then, and expressed the feelings of his human nature, viz. an exceeding grief at God's forsaking him, and a complaint that it was so. But as his prayer in the garden was properly tempered by the addition of the clause, "Yet not as I will, but as thou wilt;" so his complaint on the cross may have been tempered in the same manner, perhaps by his repeating the following third verse of the psalm, though the evangelists have not mentioned it particularly: for that in the inward disposition of his mind Jesus was perfectly resigned, even while he hanged on the cross, is evident beyond all doubt, from his recommending his spirit to God in the article of death, which he could not have done had he either despaired of the divine favour, or been discontented with the divine appointments. The sufferings which made our Lord cry out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* were not merely those which appeared to the spectators, viz. the pains of death which he then underwent. Many of his followers have suffered sharper and more lingering bodily torture, ending in death, without thinking themselves on that account forsaken of God; on the contrary, they both felt and expressed raptures of joy under the bitterest torments. Why then should Jesus have complained and been so dejected under inferior sufferings, as we must acknowledge them to be, if there was nothing here but the pains of crucifixion. Is there any other circumstance in his history, which leads us to think him defective in courage or patience? In piety and resignation came he behind his own apostles? Were his views of God and religion more confined than theirs? Had he greater sensibility of pain than they, without a proper balance*



balance arising from the superiority of his understanding? In short, was he worse qualified for martyrdom than they? The truth is, his words on the cross cannot be accounted for but on the supposition that he suffered in his mind pains inexpressible, inflicted on him by an immediate interposition of the power of God, the nature and intenseness of which cannot, in the language of men, be more justly or more emphatically expressed, than by the metaphor of *God's forsaking him*. Some think Jesus on this occasion repeated the whole xxiid Psalm. And to be sure, as it is composed in the form of a prayer, it must be acknowledged that no address could be more suitable to the circumstances wherein our Lord then was, or better adapted to impress the minds of the beholders with becoming sentiments. Nevertheless, the things mentioned by the evangelists as next happening, were of such a kind that they must have followed immediately upon the repetition of the first three or four verses of the Psalm. It is probable, therefore, that he stopt there. Perhaps it was not his intention to go farther. For as it was the custom of the Jews, when they quoted large portions of Scripture, to mention only the first verses or words of the passage, such of his hearers as knew these to be the first verses of the xxiid Psalm, would easily understand that Jesus meant to apply the whole Psalm to himself. And as it contains the most remarkable particulars of our Lord's passion, being a sort of summary of all the prophecies relative to that subject, by citing it on the cross, and applying it to himself, Jesus signified that he was now accomplishing the things therein predicted concerning Messiah. Farther, as the Psalm is composed in the form of a prayer, by citing it at this time, Jesus also claimed of his Father the performance of all the promises he had made, whether to him or to his people, the chief of which are recorded in the latter part of the Psalm. Mark xv. 35. *And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said, Behold he calleth Elias*, (Matt. *This man calleth for Elias*). Though Jesus spake in the vulgar dialect, some of the people present did not understand him; for they fancied that he called on the old prophet Elijah to help him. Hence some have conjectured that they were Roman soldiers who thus misunderstood Christ's words. The conjecture, however, cannot be admitted, unless these soldiers were proselytes, and had learned the language and religion of the Jews more perfectly than is reasonable to suppose. We may therefore believe it was our Lord's own countrymen who gave their opinion concerning the meaning of his words. And though they misunderstood him, it may have arisen neither from their ignorance of the language in which he spake, nor from their hearing him indistinctly, for he spake with a loud voice, but from their not considering that he was repeating the words of the xxiid Psalm. Moreover, into this mistake



they would the more easily fall, if his pronunciation was *Eli, Eli*, as Matthew has represented it, and not *Eloi, Eloi*, as in Mark. See Prelim. Observ. I. For thus they would imagine that he cried, "Elias, Elias, why hast thou forsaken me?" John xix. 28. *After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, I thirst: Jesus knowing that he had now accomplished every thing required by God of the Messiah, and foretold by the prophets, excepting that circumstance of his sufferings which was predicted Psal. lxxix. 21. "In my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink;" in order to give occasion to the accomplishment of this likewise, he said aloud, I thirst. Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar. The Roman soldiers always drank their water mixed with vinegar; for which purpose they usually carried vinegar with them in vessels when on duty. Matt. xxvii. 48. And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, (John, on hyssop, and put it to his mouth) and gave him to drink. They put the sponge, as John tells us, upon hyssop, i. e. a stalk of hyssop, called by the other evangelists *καλαμος*, which signifies not only a reed, but the stalk of any plant. For that hyssop was a shrub, appears from 1 Kings iv. 33. where it is reckoned among the trees. This office they did to Jesus, not so much from pity, as to preserve him alive, in hopes of seeing the miracle of Elijah's descent from heaven. Mark observes, that the person who gave Jesus the vinegar, accompanied that action by (xv. 36.) saying, *Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down.* But Matthew attributes that saying to the persons who stood by. Matt. xxvii. 49. *The rest said, Let be; let us see whether Elias will come to save him.* It seems they repeated the words of him who administered the vinegar, expressing their desire likewise that Jesus should be kept alive as long as possible, to see if Elias would come and rescue him. John xix. 30. *When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished:* The predictions of the prophets are all fulfilled, and the redemption of the world is finished, to accomplish which I came into the world. Matthew, Mark and Luke tell us, that in speaking these words, Jesus cried with an exceeding loud voice; probably to shew that his strength was not exhausted, but that he was about to give up his life of his own accord. Having thus shouted, he addressed his Father with a tone of voice such as is proper in prayer. Luke xxiii. 46. *And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.* John xix. 30. *And he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost;* leaving us the best pattern of a recommendatory prayer in the article of death.*

While Jesus breathed his last, the vail of the temple was miraculously



raculously rent from top to bottom, probably in presence of the priest who burnt the incense in the holy place at the evening sacrifice, and who, no doubt, gave an account of it when he came out; for the ninth hour, at which Jesus expired, was the hour of the evening sacrifice. Matt. xxvii. 51. *And behold, the vail of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent, 52. And the graves in the rocks were opened, and many bodies of saints which slept, arose, 53 And came out of the graves after his resurrection.* These graves were opened by the earthquake at his death, but the dead in them did not come to life till his resurrection; for Jesus himself was the first born from the dead, Col. i. 18. and the first fruits of them that slept, 1 Cor. xv. 20.—*and went into the holy city, i. e. Jerusalem, called the holy city on account of the temple and its worship: and appeared unto many.* It would seem that these saints were disciples who had died but lately. For when they went into the city, they were known to be saints by the persons who saw them; which could not well have happened had they not been their contemporaries. And as the rending of the vail of the temple, intimated that the entrance into the holy place, the type of heaven, was now laid open to all nations, so the resurrection of a number of saints from the dead, demonstrated that the power of death and the grave was broken; the sting was taken from death, and the victory wrested from the grave. In short, our Lord's conquests over the enemies of mankind were shewed to be complete, and an earnest was given of a general resurrection from the dead. Mark xv. 39. *And when the centurion (Matt. and they that were with him, watching Jesus) which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, (Matt. saw the earthquake, and those things that were done) Luke xxiii. 47. He glorified God, (by) saying, Certainly this was a righteous man, (δικαιος) the character which Pilate's lady had given of him before he was condemned, Matt. xxvii. 19. According to Mark, he said likewise, xv. 39. Truly this man was the Son of God, or Messiah. From this it would appear, that the centurion was a profelyte to the religion of the Jews, and acquainted with their opinions. Matthew says, they that were with the centurion joined him in this declaration, xxvii. 54. They feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God. Luke xxiii. 48. And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned:* The people who came to behold this melancholy spectacle, were wonderfully affected when Jesus gave up the ghost. They had been instant with loud voices to have him crucified, but now that they saw the face of the creation darkened with a sullen gloom during his crucifixion, and found his death accompanied with an earthquake, as if nature had been in an

.agony



agony when he died, they rightly interpreted these prodigies to be so many testimonies from God of his innocence; and their passions, which had been inflamed and exasperated against him, became quite calm, or moved them in his behalf. Some could not forgive themselves for neglecting to accept his life, when the governor offered to release him; others were stung with remorse for having had an active hand, both in his death and in the insults that were offered to him; others felt the deepest grief at the thought of his lot, which was undeservedly severe; and these various passions appeared in their countenances, for they came away from the cruel execution pensive and silent, with downcast eyes, and hearts ready to burst; or groaning deeply within themselves, they shed tears, smote their breasts, and wailed greatly. The grief which they now felt for Jesus was distinguished from their former rage against him by this remarkable character, that their rage was produced entirely by the craft of the priests, who had wickedly incensed them; whereas their grief was the genuine and natural feeling of their own hearts, greatly affected with the truth and innocence of him that was the object of their commiseration. Wherefore, as in this mourning flattery had no share, the expressions of their sorrow were such as became a real and unfeigned passion. Nor was this the temper only of a few who may be thought to have been Christ's particular friends. It was the general condition of the people, who had come in such numbers to look on, that when they parted after the execution they covered the roads, and as it were darkened the whole fields around. Luke xxiii. 49. *And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off beholding these things.* Who these acquaintance were, Matthew and Mark inform us, Matt. xxvii. 55. *And many women were there (beholding afar off) which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him; (Mark, who also when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him)* 56. *Among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, (Mark, James the less) and Josès, (probably this is she who is said, John xix. 25. to have been our Lord's mother's sister, and who is there called, Mary the wife of Cleophas) and (Mark, Salome) the mother of Zebedee's children.* Mark xv. 41. *And many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem.* The three evangelists agree in affirming that these women stood afar off, looking on. Yet this is not inconsistent with John xix. 25. where our Lord's mother, and her sister Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene, are said to have stood beside the cross. They were kept at a distance a while, perhaps by the guards, or they were afraid to approach. But when the greatest part of the soldiers were drawn off, and the eclipse was begun, they gathered courage, and came



came so near, that Jesus had an opportunity to speak to them a little before he expired.

§ CXLVIII. *Christ's side is pierced. He is taken down from the cross, and buried.* Matt. xxvii. 57,—66. Mark xv. 42,—47. Luke xxiii. 50,—56. John xix. 31,—42.

THE law expressly prohibited the bodies of those who were hanged, to remain all night on the tree, Deut. xxi. 22. For that reason, as well as because the Sabbath was at hand, the Jews begged the favour of Pilate, that the legs of the three crucified persons might be broken, to hasten their death. Pilate consented, and gave the order they desired. But the soldiers appointed to execute it, perceiving that Jesus was dead already, did not take the trouble of breaking his legs, one of them only thrust a spear into his side. John xix. 31. *The Jews, therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day, (for that Sabbath day was an high day) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.* John xix. 32. *Then came the soldiers and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him.* 33. *But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs.* 34. *But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.* The spear thrust into our Lord's side is thought to have reached his heart; for the water issuing from the wound seems to shew that the pericardium was pierced, and that Jesus was some time dead. Or though he had not been dead, this wound was of such a kind as must have killed him outright. And therefore, as it was of the greatest importance to mankind to be ascertained of the truth of Christ's death, when the evangelist John relates the circumstance which demonstrates it, namely, the issuing of the water out of the wound in his side, he insists upon it particularly, and mentions it as a thing which he himself saw. 35. *And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.* 36. *For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.* 37. *And again another Scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.* His legs were not broken, that that Scripture might be fulfilled, Exod. xii. 46. "Neither shall ye break a bone thereof." These words were primarily spoken of the paschal lamb, whose bones were not to be broken, that it might be a fit representation of Messiah typified by this sacrifice; and who, though he was to suffer a violent death, was to have none of his bones broken, because he was to rise from the dead on the third day. Wherefore, as the Scripture which speaks of the type has necessarily a reference to the antitype, the evangelist John had good reason to interpret



interpret what is there said of the paschal lamb, as prophetic of this circumstance of our Lord's death; and the rather, as by so doing he makes his readers sensible it was not owing to accident that the soldiers treated Christ's body otherwise than they treated the bodies of those who were crucified with him. It happened by the direction of God, who had always determined that Christ should rise from the dead, and that his mission should be fully demonstrated by the evidence of miracles and prophecies united. The same evangelist observes, that Christ's side was pierced with a spear, because another Scripture had said, Zech. xii. 10. "They shall look on him whom they have pierced."

Among the disciples of Jesus who beheld his execution, there was one named Joseph of Arimathea, a man remarkable for his birth, and fortune, and office. See the first note on § 138. Matt. xxvii. 57. *When the even was come, (Mark, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath) there came a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple.* *Ὁς καὶ αὐτὸς μαθητὴς τοῦ Ἰησοῦ*, is by some critics translated, *Who himself also made disciples to Jesus*: they mean after his ascension. This sense the word has, Matt. xxviii. 19. John iv. 1. Acts xiv. 21. Luke says he was, xxiii. 50. *a counsellor, (Mark, an honourable counsellor) and he was a good man, and a just: the same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them*: Though he was a member of the council who condemned Jesus, he did not join them in this unjust sentence. He had kept away from the court, or if he was present when the sentence was passed, he remonstrated against it\*. Luke xxii. 52. *This man went unto Pilate, and begged (John, that he might take away) the body of Jesus.* (Mark xv. 43. *Went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus.*) Joseph had nothing to fear from the governor, who in the course of the trial had shewed the greatest inclination to release Jesus; but he had reason to fear that this action might draw upon him abundance of ill-will from the rulers, who had been at such pains to get Jesus crucified. Nevertheless, the regard he had for his Master overcame all other considerations, and he asked leave to take his body down; because if no friend had obtained it, it would have been ignominiously cast out among the executed malefactors. Mark xv. 44. *And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead*: For though he had given orders to break the legs of the crucified persons, he knew that they might live some hours in that condition. *And calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead.* 45. *And when he knew it of the centurion, he gave* *the*

\* Some indeed understand this of Joseph's conduct in the governor's council, of which he was likewise a member. In this light the Evangelist's meaning is, that he remonstrated against the counsel of those who advised the governor to condemn Jesus.



*the body to Joseph.* John xix. 38. *He came therefore and took the body of Jesus.* In discharging the last duty to his Master, Joseph was assisted by another disciple, named Nicodemus, the ruler who formerly came to Jesus by night, for fear of the Jews. But he was not afraid of them now, for he shewed a courage superior to that of the apostles, bringing such a quantity of spices along with him as was necessary to the funeral of his Master. The two therefore taking down the naked body, wrapped it with the spices in the linen furnished by Joseph. They received the body from the cross in the linen cloth, and covered it therewith, for the sake of decency; but in all probability they did not wrap it in the spices till they carried it into the garden, then laid it in Joseph's sepulchre, which happened to be nigh to the place of execution. 39. *And there came also Nicodemus, (which at first came to Jesus by night) and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight.* 40. *Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes, (Matt. a clean linen cloth. Mark, some linen) with the spices, \* as the manner of the Jews is to bury.* 41. *Now in the place where he was crucified, there was a garden, † and in the garden a new sepulchre, (Matt. hewn*

\* John 40. *As the manner of the Jews is, &c.]* Those who have written upon the manners and customs of the Jews tell us, that they sometimes embalmed their dead with an aromatic mixture of myrrh, aloes, and other gums or spices, which they rubbed on the body more or less profusely according to their circumstances, and their regard to the dead. After anointing the body, they covered it with a shroud or winding-sheet, then wrapped a napkin round its head and face; others say, round the forehead only, because the Egyptian mummies are observed to have it so: last of all, they swathed the shroud round the body, as tightly as possible, with proper bandages made of linen. At other times they covered the whole body in a heap of spices. Thus it is said of Asa, 2 Chron. xvi. 14. \* *They buried him in the bed, which was filled with sweet odours and divers kinds of spices, prepared by the apothecaries art."* From the quantity of myrrh and aloes made use of by Joseph and Nicodemus, viz. an hundred pound weight, it would appear that the office performed by them to their Master was of this latter kind, John xix. 40. *They wound him in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury:* for they had not time to embalm him properly.

† John 41. *And in the garden a new sepulchre, &c.]* In the description of the sepulchre given by the evangelists, it is particularly remarked, that it was nigh to the place where he was crucified, consequently nigh to Jerusalem. By this circumstance all the cavils are prevented which might otherwise have been occasioned, in case the body had been removed farther off. Moreover, it is observed that the sepulchre was a new one, wherein never any man had been laid. This plainly proves that it could be no other than Jesus who arose; and cuts off all suspicion that he was raised by touching the bones of some prophet or other that had been buried there, as happened to the corpse which touched the bones of Elisha, 2 Kings. xiii. 20. Farther, the evangelists take notice that it was a sepulchre hewn out of a rock, to shew that there was no passage by which the disciples could get into it, but the one at which the guards were placed, (Matt.



*hewn out in the rock) wherein was never man yet laid.* Here it may be proper to observe, that Joseph, though a man of great wealth, and in an high station of life, was not intoxicated with pleasure, but lived mindful of his mortality. For he had erected for himself a sepulchre in his garden, the place of his pleasure and retirement, that it might be often in his view, and suggest to him the thought of death. John xix. 42. *There laid they Jesus, therefore, because of the Jews preparation-day, for the sepulchre, was nigh at hand.* Luke xxiii. 54. *and the Sabbath drew on.* The sepulchre in which they laid our Lord being but lately made, was unfinished, and had not yet got a lock on its door; therefore they fastened the door by rolling a great stone to it. Matt. xxvii. 60. *And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.* This sepulchre, it seems, differed from that of Lazarus, in being partly above ground; whereas the other being wholly under ground, had a stone laid on the mouth of it, covering the entry of the stair by which they went down to it. The Galilean women who had waited on Jesus in his last moments, and accompanied him to the sepulchre, observing that his funeral rites were performed in a hurry, (the body being rolled in nothing but a mixture of myrrh and aloes which Nicodemus had brought) agreed among themselves to come when the Sabbath was passed, and embalm their dead Lord, by anointing and swathing him in a proper manner. Accordingly, when he was laid in the sepulchre, they returned to the city, and bought what other spices were necessary for that purpose; Nicodemus having furnished a mixture only of myrrh and aloes. Luke xxiii. 55. *And the women also which came with him from Galilee, (Matt. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary. Mark, Mary the mother of Joses) followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid.* 56. *And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment.* This is not inconsistent with Mark xvi. 1. where we are told that they bought spices after the Sabbath was ended. It seems the quantity which according to Luke had been provided and prepared on the night of the crucifixion, was, after the preparation, judged too small; or the Sabbath coming on, they had not had time to procure all the ingredients that were necessary; for which reasons they went the first day of the week and bought more. Perhaps the money wherewith they purchased these spices was furnished by Mary Magdalene, one of their own number, who seems to have been a person of distinction, (see on Luke vii. 37. § 43.) and had often

(Matt. xxvii 62. &c.) and consequently that it was not in their power to steal away the body, while the guards remained there performing their duty.



often supplied our Lord with money. See on Luke viii. 3. § 44. Or it might be supplied by Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, if it be she who in the history of Christ's resurrection is mentioned by that name, Luke xxiv. 10. The chief priests and Pharisees, remembering that Jesus had predicted his own resurrection more than once, came to the governor and informed him of it, begging that a guard might be ordered to the sepulchre, lest the disciples should carry his body away, and affirm that he was risen from the dead. Matt. xxvii. 62. *Now the next day that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, 63 Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again* \*. 64. *Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people he is risen from the dead; so the last error shall be worse than the first.*

Τῇ ἐπαύριον ἦν αὖ μετὰ τὴν παρασκευήν, the next day that followed the day of the preparation, i. e. after the sun was set; for the Jewish day began then. They took this measure, therefore, not on the

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morrow

\* Matt. 63. *After three days I will rise again* ] When the Scribes and Pharisees demanded a sign from Jesus, he told them, Matt. xii. 39. "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. 40. For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." In which answer he predicted his own resurrection from the dead on the third day. Farther, John x. 17, 18. Jesus spake thus to the Pharisees, (see chap. ix. ver. 40.) "Therefore does my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." Also at the first passover, when the Jews required a miracle of him in confirmation of his mission, he replied, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." If the persons to whom this and the preceding declaration was made, happened to hear the promise of the miracle of the prophet Jonah, they might, by connecting the three, understand that Jesus meant to signify to them his resurrection from the dead on the third day, and might tell Pilate they remembered how when he was alive he had said, "After three days I will rise again." Perhaps also on some occasion not mentioned by the evangelists, our Lord may have made a public declaration of his resurrection in the very terms here set down. Or we may suppose that Judas informed the council of this prediction. In short, whatever way they came to the knowledge of it, certain it is that the chief priests and Pharisees were well acquainted with our Lord's predictions concerning his resurrection. It seems they were so often repeated, and so public, that they were universally known. Upon this I cannot forbear observing, that if our Lord's resurrection were a cheat imposed upon mankind by his disciples, it was the foolishlest thing imaginable for him to speak of it beforehand, because the only effect of such a prediction was to put all his enemies on their guard. Accordingly the precaution and care which we find the rulers used in guarding the sepulchre, rendered it next to impossible for the disciples to be guilty of any deceit in this matter. See on Mark viii. 31. § 70.



morrow in our sense of the word, but in the evening after sun-setting, when the Jewish Sabbath was begun, and when they understood the body was buried. To have delayed it to sunrise would have been preposterous, as the disciples might have stolen the body away during the preceding night. Besides, there is no inconsistency between this account of the time when the watch was placed, and the subsequent articles of the history, which proceed upon the supposition that the women present at our Lord's funeral were ignorant that any watch was placed at his grave. For they departed so early, that they had time to buy spices and ointments in the city before the preparation of the Sabbath was ended; whereas the watch was not placed till the Sabbath began. Matt. xxvii. 65. *Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch, go your way, make it as sure as you can.* Pilate thinking their request reasonable, allowed them to take as many soldiers as they pleased out of the cohort which at the feast came from the castle Antonia, (see the note on Mark xii. 41. § 122.) and kept guard in the porticos of the temple, Joseph. Ant. xx. 4. &c. For that they were not Jewish, but Roman soldiers, whom the priests employed to watch the sepulchre, is evident from their asking them of the governor. Besides, when the soldiers returned with the news of Christ's resurrection, the priests desired them to report that his disciples had stolen him away while they slept; and to encourage them to tell the falsehood boldly, promised, that if their neglect of duty came to the governor's ears, proper means should be used to pacify him, and keep them safe; a promise which there was no need of making to their own servants. 66. *So they went and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.* The priests going along with the party, placed them in their post, and sealed the stone that was rolled to the door of the sepulchre, to hinder the guards from combining with the disciples in carrying on any fraud. See Dan. vi. 17. where we find a precaution of the like kind made use of by Darius, in the case of Daniel shut up in the lions den. Thus, while the priests cautiously proposed to prevent our Lord's resurrection from being palmed upon the world, resolving no doubt to shew his body publicly after the third day as an impostor, they put the truth of Christ's resurrection beyond all question, by furnishing a number of unexceptionable witnesses to it, whose testimony they themselves could not refuse.



§ CXLIX. *Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, go out to see the sepulchre ; but are terrified by an earthquake. An angel descends, and Jesus arises* \*. Matt. xxviii. 1,—4. Mark xvi. 1.

**N. B.** Before this and the following sections are examined, Prelim. Observ. III. ought to be carefully read.

To reconcile the several accounts which the evangelists have given of our Lord's resurrection from the dead, it is necessary to inquire

\* Because the method observed in the remaining part of this Harmony is uncommon, it may be expected perhaps that I should take into consideration the schemes which others have proposed for reconciling the accounts given by the evangelists of our Lord's resurrection from the dead, and shew wherein those schemes are judged defective. But the reader will see, that though the importance of the subject merits the most accurate discussion, to enter into it thus minutely would be tedious. I shall therefore content myself with giving a short account of the scheme offered by Mr West, in his Observations on the resurrection of Jesus ; because I think it, upon the whole, ingenious, though I find myself obliged to recede from it in many particulars. Mr West's account of the resurrection is this.—The women who accompanied our Lord from Galilee made an appointment to come and embalm him after the Sabbath was ended. Very early therefore on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, in pursuance of their purpose, went out to view the sepulchre. About the time that they were setting out, the earthquake happened, the angel descended and rolled away the stone, and Jesus arose. The two Marys either met with, or called upon Salome in their way ; so the three went on till they came in sight of the sepulchre, and observed the door open. This circumstance leading them to conclude that the body was removed, Mary Magdalene ran immediately back to tell Peter and John what had happened. In the mean time the other Mary and Salome going forward, entered the sepulchre, and had the vision of one angel, mentioned by Matthew and Mark, which informed them that Jesus was risen, and bade them carry the news to his disciples. After they were departed, Peter and John, with Mary Magdalene, came to the sepulchre. An account of this journey we have, John xx. 1,—10. The two apostles having examined every thing departed. But Mary Magdalene staid behind them at the grave, and saw first a vision of angels, then Jesus himself. Her joy gave her speed. She ran the second time into the city, that she might impart the news to the rest. After Jesus had shewed himself to Mary Magdalene at the sepulchre, he went and met Mary Magdalene's companions, viz. Mary the mother of James, and Salome, as they were going into the town, to give an account of the vision they had seen. The apostles and Mary Magdalene had not been long away from the sepulchre, till Joanna, and some Galilean women, her companions, arrived with the spices to embalm the body. This company of women had the vision of two angels described by Luke, then departed. But, by some accident or other, Mary the mother of James, and Salome, who had been at the sepulchre and seen the one angel before Joanna came, and who as they returned had seen Jesus himself, lingered so long on the road, that Joanna and the women with her, who came to the sepulchre after them, got to the apostles lodging before them, and had told their story in such good time, that the two disciples of whom Luke speaks, chap. xxiv. 13. were  
let



inquire exactly into the time when the women first set out to visit the sepulchre.

“Matt. xxviii. 1. *In the end of the Sabbath, (Mark, And when the Sabbath was past) as it began to dawn towards the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, (Mark, Mary the mother of James) to see the sepulchre: (Singular) to see if the stone was still at the door,* because by that they would know whether the body was within. For from John xix. 42. (There laid they Jesus, therefore, because of the Jews preparation-day, for the sepulchre was nigh at hand) it would appear, that the friends of Jesus intended to carry him somewhere else; perhaps because Joseph’s sepulchre was not yet finished, being a new one. The women knowing this, had reason to think that Joseph would remove the body as soon as the Sabbath was ended. Accordingly, having bought the spices, they judged it proper to send two of their number to see if Jesus was still in the sepulchre, and if he was not, to inquire of the gardener where he was laid, John xx. 15. that when the spices were prepared, that is, pounded, mixed, and melted into an ointment, they might go directly to the place and embalm him.”

This journey to the sepulchre by the two Marys, is generally supposed to have been undertaken in *the morning*, according to our sense of the word, that is to say, some time after midnight. But this opinion, though universally received, may justly be called in question. For, first of all, what reason can be assigned for the women’s not going to see the sepulchre as soon as the Jewish Sabbath was ended, that is, on Saturday immediately after sun-setting, (see Lev. xxiii. 32.) when they had more than an hour’s twilight to carry them thither? In the second place, since they delayed it at all, why did they go at two or three in the morning, rather than at some more seasonable hour? Their anxiety cannot be pleaded, because that would have carried them out the precedent evening; nor can their fear of the Jews be alleged as the reason, seeing they had been so bold as to stand by the cross of Christ during his crucifixion, John xix. 25. Besides, the Romans and Jews had already permitted our Lord’s friends to pay him funeral honours unmolested. And as for the soldiers at the sepulchre, if the women had known any thing about them, it must have frightened them from going in the night-time, rather than in the evening. To conclude, it cannot be said that the journey was too great to be undertaken in the evening; for the sepulchre was nigh to the city, John xix. 20, 41. It may be said indeed, that it was always full moon at the passover, and therefore

set out for Emmaus, and Peter was gone to the sepulchre a second time before they came up. This, if I mistake not, is Mr West’s account of the resurrection. The reasons on which it is built shall be considered by and by, and what appear to be its defects shewed.



therefore that the middle of the night was as proper a season for their visit as any. It would not, however, be a proper season, if the weather was either rainy or cloudy then, as it seems actually to have been. This I gather from John xx. 1. where we are told, that in the morning when Mary Magdalene came to the sepulchre, *it was dark*. In the mean time, though the weather had been ever so fine, it was more agreeable to the womens anxiety, and to the design of their journey, which was to see the sepulchre, (a design which did not admit of any delay) and in every respect more proper for them to make their visit at the end of the Jewish Sabbath, when it was still light, than to defer it till two or three o'clock next morning. Wherefore, if the reasoning is to proceed upon the acknowledged circumstances of this affair, it cannot, I think, be allowed, that the women delayed visiting the sepulchre till the morning of the first day of the week. It is much more probable, that by appointment of the rest, and in conformity to their own inclinations, the two set out for the sepulchre on Saturday evening, according to our form of the day, perhaps about six or seven o'clock at night.

The reader will be pleased to take notice, that the time here fixed for the womens first visit to the sepulchre, is capable of a direct proof likewise from the words of the text. Matt. xxviii. 1. *In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn towards the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, to see the sepulchre.* According to the Jewish form of the day, the Sabbath ended, and the first day of the week began at sun-setting. Lev. xxiii. 32. "From even unto even shall ye celebrate your Sabbaths," If so, Matthew's description of the time when the women set out for the sepulchre, fixes it expressly to the evening, notwithstanding the word *dawn*, in our translation, falsely protracts it to some hour after midnight, being very improperly used in this passage. The word in the original is *επιφωσκον*, which, applied to the Jewish day, signifies simply that *the day began*, without conveying any idea of light at all; contrary, I own, to its primary meaning, which doubtless includes the notion of light gradually increasing, in conformity to the commencement of the day among the Greeks, who formed the word so as to denote their own idea. But however contrary to the analogy of the Greek language, this signification of the word *επιφωσκον* may seem, it could have no other in the mouth of a Jew, whose days all began at sun-setting. Besides, it has this meaning without dispute, Luke xxiii. 54. where, in the history of our Lord's burial, it is said, "And that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath (*επιφωσκει*) *dawned*," i. e. was about to begin, or, as it is well rendered in our version, *drew on*: for no body ever fancied that Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus laid Jesus in the sepulchre when the Jewish Sabbath *dawned*, in the sense



sense of its becoming light. But the meaning which this Greek word has in Luke it may have in Matthew, or rather must have; as it cannot be imagined that an historian capable of common accuracy, much less an inspired writer, would say it *dawned towards the first day of the week*, nine or ten hours after the first day of the week began. Nor would he say that the women made their visit in the end of the Sabbath, if they really made it towards the middle of the day following. Farther, although *σπ* is used by the sacred writers with all the latitude of *σπ*, I apprehend that no passage of their writings can be produced, in which either the one or the other signifies the middle of the night, far less the morning. As the Jewish day began at sun-setting, they distinguished the evening into two parts, which they called the first and second evenings; the *first* being the evening with which the precedent day ended, and the *second* the evening with which the new day began. Hence the expression in the institution of the passover, Exod. xii. 6. "between the two evenings." So it is in the original; see the marginal translation. Compare also Matt. xiv. 15. with verse 23. where both evenings are mentioned. The first evening was the space from three in the afternoon to sun-setting, the second began at sun-setting and lasted till nine, comprehending the whole first watch of the night, which was therefore called *σπ*. See Mark xiii. 35. § 123. where all the four watches are enumerated. But in the passage under consideration, *σπ* signifies the first evening, being *the evening of the Sabbath that drew on towards the first day of the week*, *σπ δὲ σαββάτου, τῇ ἐπιφωσκειν εἰς μίαν σαββάτου*. The truth is, though *σπ*, with its primitive *σπ*, was applied by Jewish writers indifferently to the first and second evenings, these words, as far as I know, were never used to denote any time later than nine o'clock at night, when the first watch ended.

"For these reasons I think it probable, that the two Marys attempted to visit the sepulchre in the end of the Jewish Sabbath, or about the setting of the sun on our Saturday evening\*. I say attempted

\* But there are three objections against fixing on Saturday evening as the time of the women's first visit to the sepulchre.

One objection against it is taken from Mark xvi. 9. *Ἀνέσται δὲ πρῶτον πρὸς τὴν σαββάτου ἑσπέραν πρῶτον Μαρία τὴν Μαγδαλὴν*. Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene. Here the evangelist seems to affirm, that Christ's resurrection happened in the morning of the first day of the week; whereas if the women were driven back by the storm about the time that Jesus arose, his resurrection must have happened about eight or nine o'clock on Saturday evening. But the answer is, it does not necessarily follow that Jesus arose on Saturday evening, because the storm occasioned by the descent of the angel began then. The storm may have come on several hours before the angel descended, and yet his descent might be the occasion of it. Wherefore, if it is judged necessary, we may suppose that the angel descended, and Jesus arose after the



attempted to visit the sepulchre, because it does not appear that they actually went thither. While they were going, there was a great earthquake, viz. that which preceded the most memorable event which ever happened among men, the resurrection of the Son

the middle of the night, the storm continuing to rage all the while. Nevertheless, if the reader is of opinion that the angel descended about the time that the women were driven back, the objection can be removed on this supposition also. For the angel may have rolled away the stone, and put the guards into confusion, some hours before our Lord arose; it being as easy to suppose the heavenly being tarrying at the sepulchre before Christ's resurrection as after. And therefore though he descended before the women went out to see the sepulchre, Jesus may not have arisen till after midnight, as Mark seems to say. Or, though he arose about nine or ten o'clock on Saturday evening, Mark's words may easily be interpreted so as to agree fully therewith: thus, put the point in the Greek sentence cited from Mark, after the word *καὶ*, and its proper translation will be, *Now having arisen, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, in the morning of the first day of the week.* A sense of the passage abundantly more agreeable to the several circumstances of this important affair, than that which is given in the common version.

A second objection is taken from Matt. xxviii. 5. "And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye," &c. This connection is thought to insinuate that the two Marys did not turn back when the earthquake or storm began, but went directly to the sepulchre where they had the interview with the angel which Matthew speaks of. The answer to this objection is twofold. First, it is certain that Mary Magdalene was not one of the women to whom the angel spake, ver. 5. as she must have been if that verse is to be taken in strict connection with the precedent part of the chapter. For when the angel first appeared to the women, Mary Magdalene was in the city with Peter and John. I think this evident from her own words to those apostles, John xx. 2. "They have taken away the Lord, and we know not where they have laid him:" plainly implying, that she had not then seen the angels. Moreover, when they appeared to her, they did not inform her of Christ's resurrection, as the angel is said to have done on this occasion. For when Jesus himself spake to her after she had seen the angels, and asked whom she was seeking, she replied, ver. 15. "Sir, if thou hast borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away." To conclude, the account which John gives in his gospel of her return to the sepulchre, puts it beyond all doubt that she was there alone when she saw the angels, and that she did not join the women her companions till she met them at the apostles lodging. Secondly, this sort of transition and connection by which things are joined as if they had happened about the same time, though in reality a good space intervened between them, is often to be found in sacred history. Thus, John xviii. 38. "Pilate saith unto him (*Jesus*), What is truth? and, when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all. 39. But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the passover. Will ye therefore that I release unto you the king of the Jews?" as if Pilate had made them this offer immediately after examining Jesus in the prætorium; whereas it is certain that very important matters intervened. For after Pilate had declared Jesus innocent, as John informs us, the Jews began to accuse him more vehemently (Luke); and having signified in their accusation that he was a Galilean, Pilate sent him to Herod. But Herod sending him back without finding him guilty, Pilate went out and offered to release



Son of God from the dead. This earthquake, I suppose, frightened the women to such a degree, that they immediately turned back \*. Or their return may have been rendered necessary by a storm

release him. In the like manner, Mark xvi. 14. Christ's appearance to the eleven, on the eighth day after his resurrection, is related, together with a discourse of his which was not spoken till the ascension day, about a month after; though by the connection it looks as if it had been spoken at that appearance. "Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat," &c. 15. "And he said unto them, Go ye into all nations and preach the gospel to every creature," &c. This is precisely, and in every respect, the form of connection made use of by Matthew, xxviii. 5. "And the angel answered and said unto the women," &c. We have another example, Luke xxiv. 36. where the evangelist giving an account of Christ's appearing to the ten on the evening of the resurrection day, connects with it his discourse to the eleven before his ascension. Ver. 42. "And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb: 43. And he took it, and did eat before them. 44. And he said unto them, These are the words," &c. as if he had spoken this, not only at the time, but to the persons mentioned in the precedent verses; whereas we know that Thomas was absent when Jesus shewed himself to his apostles on the evening after his resurrection. This also is precisely the same sort of transition that is made use of by Matthew, when he introduces the angels speaking to both the women who went in the evening to view the sepulchre, though in reality they spake to a company of women next morning, in which one of them only was present. The example is a remarkable one, and should be accurately examined, because it appears from the history of the Acts of the apostles, that Luke, who connects the two events in his gospel, knew very well that they happened at different times. For he tells us that Jesus continued on earth forty days after his resurrection; so that it could not be his intention, in his gospel, to represent him as ascending into heaven the evening of the day on which he arose. By parity of reason it must be allowed, that notwithstanding Matthew seems to connect the two events of which he speaks, he may have known that the one happened in the evening, and the other early next morning. For more examples, see Prelim. Observ. III.

Thirdly, on supposition that Jesus arose on the Saturday evening, it may be objected that Christians observe no part of the day whereon he arose as their Sabbath. But, without regard to the point in debate, it must be owned that our Sabbath is not precisely the day of the week which the primitive Christians observed as their Sabbath. Their first day of the week, and consequently their Sabbath, began on Saturday at sun-setting. Wherefore it can be no objection against our Lord's rising on our Saturday evening, that the time of his resurrection is not comprehended in the Sabbath as we observe it, any more than it is an objection against the present Sabbath itself, that the former part of the ancient Christian Sabbath has been let drop out of it altogether. Had that been retained, the objection could not have had any foundation, for which reason it should not be urged.

\* It is true, Matthew says that the women *came* to see the sepulchre; but the word *ἦλθον* which he makes use of, does not imply that they arrived at the sepulchre. All who understand the Greek, know that *ἔλθω* signifies *to go*, as well as *to come*. (See Mark vii. 31. Luke ii. 44. in the original.) And that it signifies *to go* in this passage, is plain, because the angel descended, rolled away the stone, and terrified the guards, after the women are said *to have come*; though, from the nature of the thing, it is certain



storm, if this earthquake was attended with a storm. Or we may espouse the opinion of Hammond and Le Clerc, who interpret the words σεισμος μεγας \*, in this passage, of a *tempest* only. As the tempest, therefore, or earthquake which preceded our Lord's resurrection was a great one, it could hardly fail to lay the women under a necessity of returning. The guards, it is true, remained at the sepulchre all the while; but there was a great difference between the tempers of the perious, not to mention that the men being soldiers, duty obliged them to keep their post as long as possible. The whole of this account acquires a farther degree of probability from the following remark: that on supposition our Lord's resurrection was preceded by a tempest, or earthquake, or both, which frightened the two Marys as they went to the sepulchre, and made them turn back, we can see the reason why the women did not go out with the spices till the morning, notwithstanding, according to Luke, they had bought and prepared at least the greater part of them, the evening on which Jesus was buried, and notwithstanding the nature of embalming required that they should make as much dispatch as possible.

“ After the two Marys returned, they went with their companions, and bought what spices were necessary to complete the preparation. So Mark says, xvi. 1. *Και διαγαμωσθε τε σαββατα Μαρια η Μαγδαληνη, και Μαρια η τε Ιακωβου, και Σαλομη αγοράσαι αρωματα να ιθυσαι αλειψασιν αυτον.* *And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him.* Having set out for the sepulchre, in the end of the Jewish Sabbath, when the first day of the week was drawing on, by the time that they returned they found their companions going to buy more spices, the Sabbath being ended; and so went along with them, as Mark affirms. For though the storm had hindered them from proceeding to the sepulchre, they might attend their companions without much inconveniency, especially if the spices were to be had in any shop hard by. While the women were making these preparations for embalming Jesus, he arose from the dead; his resurrection being preceded by the descent of an angel, whose appearance at the sepulchre was ushered in with a great earthquake, and a storm which lasted several hours. Matt. xxviii. 2. *And behold there was a great earthquake (σεισμος), for the angel of the Lord*

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*descended*

certain that all must have been over before they arrived. The translation therefore of Matt xxviii. 1. should run thus: *Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the sepulchre.*

\* Σεισμος properly signifies any shaking, whether in the earth, air, or sea. Thus, Matt. viii. 24. *σεισμος εν τη θαλασση*, is rightly rendered *a tempest in the sea*. So likewise, Ezek. iii. 12. LXX. *αυσα φωνη σεισμου μεγαλου*, *I heard the voice of a great wind, saying, &c.* Withal *ευσσεισμος* is the word by which the LXX. denote a *whirlwind*, such as that wherein Elijah was caught up, 2 Kings ii. 1.



*descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.* The angel who now descended assuming a very awful and majestic form, the guards were exceedingly affrighted. 3. *His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow.* 4. *And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.* Probably they fainted away. It is not said at what particular instant Jesus arose, whether it was before the guards fell into the swoon, or after they recovered themselves and fled. Mark, indeed, by observing that Jesus appeared first to Mary Magdalene, may be thought to insinuate that the guards did not see him when he arose; yet the evangelist's words do not necessarily imply this, for his meaning may be, that he appeared to Mary Magdalene first of all the disciples only. Besides, though the guards saw him arise, it was, properly speaking, no appearance of Christ to them. However, be this as it will, it is certain that Jesus was arisen and gone before any of the women arrived at the sepulchre. Probably also the angel had left the stone on which he sat at first, and had entered into the sepulchre; for, as we shall see immediately, when he shewed himself to the women, he invited them not to go, but to *come* and see the place where the Lord lay. Besides, when the women observed the stone rolled from the door of the sepulchre, they saw no angel sitting on the stone, as is evident from their going so briskly forward. Mark xvi. 5."

Jesus, by his miraculous power, could easily have rolled the stone from the door of his sepulchre, and therefore the descent of an angel was not necessary in that respect. But it was necessary, among other things, in order to throw the guards into a consternation before Jesus came forth, lest they should have offered to lay violent hands on him, as was done in the garden of Gethsemane, even after he had cast the whole party down on the ground. It is true the divine wisdom and power could have intimidated the soldiers by a variety of methods; but the one pitched upon was certainly as proper as any. For they were effectually frightened by the majestic appearance of the angel, but especially by the lightning which flashed from his countenance; so that if they recovered out of their swoon before Jesus arose, and staid till they saw him come forth, those marks of subjection and reverence which the celestial being may be supposed to have shewed him as he passed, together with the office of rolling back the stone, and opening the door, which he had humbly performed in quality of a servant, no doubt struck the guards with such awe, that they allowed Jesus to depart leisurely and unmolested. Thus it appears that our Lord's resurrection was not accomplished in an instant. The circumstances attending it were numerous, and such as filled up a considerable space of time; by which means the soldiers had opportunity to recollect their thoughts,

and



and ascertain themselves with respect to what they saw. They were perfectly well qualified, therefore, for bearing witness to Christ's resurrection. Accordingly they gave a relation of it which could not be called in question, to the great mortification of the chief priests, who, as we shall see immediately, on hearing the truth, resolved to stifle it; and for that purpose hired the soldiers to conceal the real fact, and to publish every where that his disciples had stolen the body away while they slept; a story altogether inconsistent, and which carried along with it its own confutation.

§ CL. *On the morning of the first day of the week, all the women go to the sepulchre. They enter, but cannot find the body. Mary Magdalene returns to inform the disciples of this. The women who stay behind see a vision of angels in the sepulchre, upon which they likewise run into the city. Matt. xxviii. 5,—8. Mark xvi. 2,—8. Luke xxiv. 1,—11. John xx. 1,—4.*

“ On the morning of the first day of the week, according to our form of the day, when the weather was become calm, and every thing was made ready, all the women went out together very early, carrying the spices which they had prepared, to the sepulchre, at which they arrived about the rising of the sun. Luke xxiv. 1. *Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them. Mark xvi. 2. And very early in the morning, the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun. John xx. 1. The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre.*”

That the journey of the women to the sepulchre in the morning, described by Mark and Luke, was made by all of them in one body or company, and at one time, is more than probable for the following reasons. The women said to have gone to the sepulchre, are the same in the three evangelists; and the time fixed for their journey by each is the same. 1. The time fixed for this journey by Mark is *μακρην, very early in the morning*, xvi. 2. by Luke, *αρχην βαθιαν, very early in the morning*, xxiv. 1. by John, *σκοτίας επι κούης, while it was yet dark*. This latter expression, however, does not imply that it was absolutely dark when Mary Magdalene came, or rather went (see the note on Matt. xxviii. 1. p. 792.) to the sepulchre; for had it been so, she could not at any distance have observed the stone rolled away, a circumstance mentioned by John himself. But the meaning is, that notwithstanding the moon was then full, and the sun about to rise, it was not very light when she set out, perhaps because the weather was hazy or rainy. 2. The women said to have made this journey, are in all the evangelists the same. *Mary Magdalene,*



*Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome*, are said, Mark xvi. 1. to have bought the spices, and to have come to the sepulchre very early in the morning. *Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and certain others with them*, consequently Salome whom Mark has mentioned, are said, Luke xxiv. 10. to have told the apostles that the door of the sepulchre was open, and the Lord's body taken away, and that they had seen a vision of angels \* which assured them he was arisen. Mary Magdalene, therefore, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, were the women who made the visit with the spices early in the morning, described by Luke as the foundation of this information. John indeed speaks of none of the women who made this visit to the sepulchre, but Mary Magdalene. Yet because he mentions none but her, it does not follow that there was no body with her. In the gospels there are many such omissions: for instance, Mark and Luke speak of one demoniac only who was cured at Gadara, though Matthew tells us there were two who had devils expelled out of them at that time. In like manner, Mark and Luke speak only of one blind man to whom Jesus gave sight near Jericho, while from Matthew it is certain two had that benefit conferred on them there. Before Jesus rode into Jerusalem, both the ass and its colt were brought to him, though Mark, Luke, and John speak only of the colt. Wherefore, since it is the manner of the sacred historians in other instances, John may be supposed to have mentioned Mary Magdalene singly in this part of his history, notwithstanding he knew that others had been with her at the sepulchre; and the rather, that his intention was to relate only what things happened in consequence of her information, and not to speak of the transactions of the rest, which his brethren historians had handled at large. Yet he seems to insinuate that some person had been with Mary Magdalene at the sepulchre, for he tells us that she spake to the apostles in

\* According to Mr West, indeed, Luke does not mean that the two Marys informed the apostles of the vision, but only that Joseph and Nicodemus had laid the body in the sepulchre, and that the stone was rolled away. But this interpretation does not appear quite natural, even on his own supposition of taking the passage in construction with the precedent chapter. Besides, Mary and Salome, said by Luke to have concurred in that information, had not, on Mr West's scheme, arrived when Joanna gave it; and therefore they could not join so much as in the small circumstance of the stone's being rolled away. With respect to Mary Magdalene, taking it for granted that Luke speaks of her first information, the history of which we have John xx. and that he joins it with the information of Joanna and her companions, it is very difficult to conceive how she could affirm that the body was taken away, if, as Mr West finds himself obliged to suppose, she had not been then in the sepulchre. I should think it not only more consonant to her information, but more agreeable to nature also to suppose, that seeing the door open, she went up with her companions, and entering, found it empty before she had any thoughts of going to the apostles, as Luke also seems to insinuate.



in the plural number, *We know not where they have laid him.* This argument, I acknowledge, by itself does not prove the point; nevertheless, set in the light of the several histories joined together, it is of moment. In a word, since the time fixed by all the evangelists for this journey is precisely the same, and the women who made it mentioned by all are the same, it is evident that they do not speak of two different journies made by different companies of women, but of one journey only made by the women in a body.

“ Mark xvi. 3. *And, now while the women were going along, they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?* 4. *For it was very great.* It seems they knew not what had happened; for those of them who had set out the preceding evening had not got to the sepulchre. At length drawing near, they had their uneasiness removed, the stone was rolled away, and the door open. *And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away.* Luke xiv. 3. *And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.* Though they felt all round the sepulchre, they could not find the body. Being therefore in great perplexity, it is natural to imagine that they would consult among themselves about the steps they were next to take. The issue of their deliberation seems to have been, that Mary Magdalene, whose zeal disposed her cheerfully to undertake the office, should go immediately to the apostles, and inquire of them whether the body had been removed with their knowledge, and where they had directed it to be laid; and that in the mean time the rest were to search the garden carefully, in order to find it. Coming out of the sepulchre, therefore, Mary Magdalene departed and ran into the city, where she found the apostles, and told them that the body was taken away. John xx. 2. *Then she runneth and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.* Peter and John only are mentioned in this relation, but the circumstances taken notice of by the other evangelists, shew that the apostles lodged all together in one house, as they used to do while their Master was alive. If so, it is reasonable to believe that they all heard Mary Magdalene's report, and were anxious to know the truth of it. But in their present situation they would judge it imprudent to go out in a body to examine the matter, and would rather depute two of their number for that purpose. Accordingly I suppose that Peter and John went to the sepulchre by the advice and appointment of the rest. 3. *Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came (or rather, went) to the sepulchre, as is plain from the following verse, 4. So they ran both together.*

“ While these things were doing in the city, the women at  
the



the sepulchre having searched the garden to no purpose, resolved, now that they had more light, to examine the sepulchre a second time, when, to their great surprise, just as they entered, they saw a beautiful young man, in shining raiment very glorious to behold, sitting on the right side. Mark xvi. 5. *And entering into the sepulchre, (a second time, namely, after Magdalene was gone, and after they had searched a while for the body in the garden) they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment.* Matthew (verse 4, 5.) says, that it was the angel who had rolled away the stone, and frightened the guards from the sepulchre. It seems he had now laid aside the terrors in which he was arrayed, and assumed the form and dress of a human being, in order that when the women saw him, they might be as little terrified as possible. Mark xvi. 5. *And they were affrighted.* So affrighted, we may suppose, that they were on the point of turning back. But the angel, to banish their fears, told them with a gentle accent that he knew their errand. Matt. xxviii. 5. *And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye :* (Mark, *Be not affrighted*) *for I know that ye seek Jesus (Mark, of Nazareth) which was crucified. 6 He is not here ; for he is risen, as he said :—*then invited them to come down and see the place where he had lain, i. e. to look on the linen-rollers and the napkin which had been about his body, but which he had left behind when he arose ; for to look at the place in any other view, would not have been a confirmation of their faith in his resurrection : *Come see (Mark, behold) the place where the Lord lay : (Mark, where they laid him).* This is the appearance of the one angel which Matthew and Mark have described. The women, much encouraged by the agreeable news, as well as by the sweet accent with which the heavenly being spake, went down into the sepulchre, and lo another angel appeared. Probably the one sat at the head, the other at the feet where the body of Jesus had lain ; the situation in which they shewed themselves by and by to Mary Magdalene, John xx. 12. This latter is the vision of two angels, which Luke, who wrote his gospel first, (see Prelim. Observ. VII.) has described as the principal vision, xxvi. 3, 4."

If the reader will attend to the supposed form of the sepulchre, and to the position of our Lord's body therein, he will find this method of reconciling the evangelists easy, natural, and probable. The sepulchre seems to have been a square room hewn out of a rock, partly above ground, its roof being as high as the top of the door which formed its entrance. This door opened upon a stair which ran down straight to the bottom of the sepulchre, along the side of its left wall. Such, I say, may have been the form of the sepulchre. Having therefore carried the body down with its feet foremost, they would naturally place it lengthwise  
by



by the right-side wall of the sepulchre, in such a manner that its head lay pointing towards what might be called the front, had the sepulchre been wholly above ground, and its feet to the back-wall. They laid the body on the floor, close to the right-side wall of the sepulchre, because in that position it was most out of the way of those who might come down. This description is agreeable to the accounts which travellers give us of the Jewish sepulchres, particularly Mr Maundrel, who was on the spot, and saw several of them. They were generally caves or rooms, hewn out of rocks. And as the Jews did not make use of coffins, they placed their dead separately in niches \*, or little cells cut into the sides of these caves or rooms. See Maundrel's description of the sepulchres of the kings, p. 76. But Joseph's sepulchre being a new one, was in all probability unfinished; and particularly it might have no niches cut into its sides, where they could deposite the dead; for which reason they laid Jesus on the floor (see John xx. 12.) in the manner described, intending, when the Sabbath was passed, to remove him to some finished burial place †, John

\* This form of the Jewish sepulchres suggests an easy solution of a very important difficulty in the history of Lazarus's resurrection, and consequently is much confirmed by that history. It is said that when Jesus called upon Lazarus to come forth, "He came out bound hand and foot." But deists talking of this miracle, commonly ask, with a sneer, How he could come out of a grave, who was bound in that manner? The answer however is obvious. The evangelist does not mean that Lazarus walked out of the sepulchre, but that, lying on his back, he raised himself into a sitting posture, then putting his legs over the edge of his niche or cell, slid down, and stood upright upon the floor; all which he might easily do, notwithstanding his arms were close bound to his body, and his legs were tied strait together by means of the shroud and rollers with which he was swathed. See on John xix. 40 § 148. Accordingly, when he was come forth, it is said that Jesus ordered them to loose him and let him go; a circumstance plainly importing that the historian knew that Lazarus could not walk till he was unbound.

† To the above description it cannot be objected, that what is shewed at this day as our Lord's sepulchre is of a different form. For the real sepulchre being originally a matter of private property, must have passed from one owner to another, and of course have undergone various changes; especially as it does not appear that the first Christians were led to preserve it from that veneration for places and things, which in latter ages engrossed the attention of the world. Besides, it should be considered, that though superstition did teach Christians very early to venerate and perpetuate things of this kind, their enemies on the other hand would do what they could to destroy them, as having a tendency to confirm the followers of the new religion in their opinions. And therefore if our Lord's sepulchre was visited by Christians before they obtained the protection of the civil government in Judea, the rulers would certainly destroy it. Nor is this supposition rendered improbable by the accounts that are given of the sepulchre as subsisting in latter times. For when the Roman empire became Christian, and superstition grew apace, the monks would repair the repository of the Lord's body; or, if it was entirely destroyed, would make a new one to supply its place. Farther, it ought to be considered, that although



John xix. 42.—Admitting these suppositions, the most of which are founded on some authority, and all of them perfectly natural, the women designing to search the sepulchre a second time, might, as soon as they came upon the threshold, see the angel who sat on the right side, where the feet of Jesus had been, that is, who sat in the farthest right corner of the sepulchre. And though his companion, who sat on the same side at the head, or in the hithermost right corner, had been then visible, they would not have observed him; so that at the first they must have seen one angel only, as Matthew and Mark tell us. But stepping down the stair, upon the invitation of the angel who appeared, they got the whole cavity of the sepulchre under their eye, and discovered the other heavenly being also. Thus they saw two angels, as Luke expressly affirms. Besides, the brilliant appearance of him who spake to them, might so fix their eyes as to hinder them from taking notice of his companion, till landing at the bottom of the stair they turned themselves about upon the floor. Their fear and confusion also might have some influence upon them.

“ Luke xxiv. 3. *And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.* 4. *And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed*

although the sepulchre had actually subsisted safe till it came into the possession of the monks, it was liable to many accidents after that period. For during the wars which the Mahometans waged with the Christians about the possession of the holy land, it is natural to suppose, that when the former carried their victorious armies into Judea, they would destroy every monument of Christianity, as well as of learning. After they were driven out, indeed, the Christians would be equally assiduous to repair the devastations occasioned by the Mahometans; and in particular they would take care not to be without the holy places, so necessary to the superstition of the times. And what confirms this conjecture is, that in the descriptions given of those places, as they now subsist, things evidently and grossly fictitious are found. For example, before our Lord's sepulchre there lies a great marble stone, on which they affirm his body was anointed. And near at hand is another sepulchre, in which Joseph of Arimathea is said to have been buried. Nay, they even shew the room where the Virgin Mary was saluted by the angel; with many other things, the knowledge of which could not possibly be preserved during the course of so many ages. Farther, it is certain that the sepulchre in Bede's time was different not only from what it is at present, but from that which the evangelists have described. For he tells us, that the travellers of those days affirmed it had a niche, into which our Lord's body was put. Whereas, from John xx 11, 12. it appears, that his body was laid on the floor. Maldonat. on Matt. xxvii. 60. “ *Describit hoc loco Beda Christi monumentum ex eorum fide, qui suo tempore religionis causa Hierosolymam ibant. De monumento, inquit, Domini fuerunt qui nostræ ætatis tempore de Ierosolymis venerunt, quod domus fuerit rotunda, de subjacente rupe excisa, tantæ altitudinis, ut intro confusus homo vis manu extenta culmen possit attingere; quæ habet introitum ab oriente, cui lapis ille magnus advolutus atque impositus est; in cujus monumenti parte aquilonari sepulchrum ipsum, hoc est, locus Domini corporis, de eadem petra factus est. septem habens pedes longitudinis, trium vero palmarum mensura cetero pavimento altius eminens. Qui videlicet locus, non desuper sed a latere meridiano per totum patulus est. unde corpus inferebatur. Color autem ejusdem monumenti ac loculi, rubicundo et albo dicitur esse permixtus.*”



*perplexed thereabout, behold two men \* stood by them in shining garments.* From this account indeed it is generally inferred, that the angels appeared to the women on their first entering into the sepulchre. But the conclusion is by no means certain; for the evangelist does not tell us where the angels appeared, whether in the sepulchre or out of it. In his account therefore of the matter, there is nothing forbidding us to suppose that the women, after missing the body, came out and searched for it up and down the garden, then went in a second time, and discovered the angels as they entered; for they were still in perplexity when the heavenly messengers spoke to them, which is all that Luke affirms. And as there is nothing in Luke's narration forbidding us to make the supposition just now mentioned, so the circumstance taken notice of by John, that Magdalene told the apostles they had taken away the Lord's body, obliges us to make it; for if, when she entered into the sepulchre with her companions, the angel had appeared to them and told them that Jesus was risen, she could not have spoken in this manner to the apostles. Luke indeed joins the appearance of the two angels with the account which he gives of the women's perplexity occasioned by their not finding the body, because he did not judge it worth while to distinguish the appearance of the one angel, while the women were on the top of the stair, from the appearance of both the angels after they were come down, as they happened in close succession. Matthew and Mark have supplied this defect by informing us, that immediately upon their entering, the women saw an angel who told them Jesus was risen, and desired them to come down and see the place where the Lord lay. Because the women were exceedingly afraid when the first angel appeared, he spake to them with much mildness, Matt. xxviii. 5. But now that

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their

\* Luke 4. *Stood by them.*] The original word *ἵστησαν* does not imply that the angels, at their first appearance, were close by the women. I prove this from Gen. xviii. 2. LXX. where, though it be said that "Abraham lift up his eyes, and looked, and lo three men (*ἑστησαν ἄνθρωποι αὐτῷ*) stood by him," it is added, that "when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent-door:" which shews that they were at some distance from him. Wherefore, *ἵστησαν αὐτοῖς*, in Luke, answering to *ἑστησαν ἄνθρωποι αὐτῷ*, signifies simply *they appeared unto them*. If so, we may suppose that both the angels were in a sitting posture when they shewed themselves to the women; because Mark affirms it expressly of the one whom he mentions, verse 5. and because they shewed themselves in this posture afterwards to Mary Magdalene, John xx. 12. However, if the reader is not satisfied with this solution, the evangelists may easily be reconciled by supposing that the angel of whom Mark speaks arose when the women went down into the sepulchre. This manner of the angels shewing themselves was agreeable to the benignity of their nature, and the graciousness of the errand on which they were come. For had they not appeared till the women were got down into the sepulchre, the light issuing from their garments and countenances, together with the unexpectedness and terror of the vision, must have made the timorous women to faint away.



their terror was a little abated, and they were come down into the sepulchre, he chid them gently for seeking the living among the dead : by which we are not to understand their coming down in obedience to his invitation, but their having brought spices to the sepulchre, with an intention to do their Master an office that belonged only unto the dead ; for that was a clear proof of their not entertaining the least thought of his resurrection ; accordingly he found fault with them also for not believing the things which Jesus had spoken to them in Galilee, concerning his rising from the dead on the third day ; or rather, for not remembering them so as to have had some hopes of his reviving again. Luke xxiv. 5. *And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead ?* 6. *He is not here, but is risen : remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee.* 7. *Saying, the Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.* This evangelist having no intention to tell which of the angels spake, attributes to them both words which, in the nature of the thing, could be spoken only by one of them, perhaps the one mentioned by Matthew and Mark. See on Matt. xxvii. 44. § 144. Farther, as it is the custom of the sacred historians to mention one person or thing only, even in cases where more were concerned, the difficulty arising from Luke's speaking of two angels, and the rest but of one, would have been nothing, because we might have supposed that all the women went into the sepulchre together, as Luke tells us, and that when they did not find the body, they dispatched Mary Magdalene immediately into the city, with an account of the matter ; and that when she was gone, the angels appeared unto the rest, while they were yet in the sepulchre. But as Luke affirms that they had searched the sepulchre, and were in perplexity on account of the body's being away, before the angels appeared ; and Matthew intimates that they were out of the sepulchre when they saw the vision he speaks of, chap. xxviii. 6. we are obliged to make the suppositions mentioned above. When the women had satisfied their curiosity by looking at the place where the Lord had lain, and where nothing was to be found but the linen clothes in which he had been swathed, the angel who first appeared to them bade them go and tell his disciples, particularly Peter, the glad news of his resurrection from the dead ; that he was going before them to Galilee ; and that they should have the pleasure of seeing him there. Matt. xxviii. 7. *And go quickly, and tell his disciples (Mark, and Peter), that he is risen from the dead ; and behold he goeth before you into Galilee, there shall ye see him, (Mark, as he said unto you \*) lo, I have told you.* This

\* Mark 7. *There shall ye see him, as he said unto you.*] Our Lord's promise



This message, as well as that from Jesus himself, Matt. xxviii. 9, 10. was sent to all the disciples, and not to the apostles in particular. The reason may have been this: our Lord intending to visit his apostles that very evening, there was no occasion to order them into Galilee to see him. But as most of his disciples were now in Jerusalem celebrating the passover, it may easily be imagined, that on receiving the news of their Master's resurrection, many of them would resolve to tarry in expectation of meeting with him; a thing which must have been very inconvenient for them at that time of the year, when the harvest was about to begin, the sheaf of first fruits being always offered on the second day of the passover week. Wherefore, to prevent their being so long from home, the messages mentioned were sent, directing them to return into Galilee, well assured that they should have the pleasure of seeing their Lord there, and, by that means, be happily relieved from the suspicion of his being an impostor, which no doubt had arisen in their minds when they saw him expire upon the cross. Accordingly he appeared, as we shall see by and by, to more than five hundred of them at once, who in consequence of this appointment gathered together to see him. The women, highly elated with the news of their Lord's resurrection, and of his intending to shew himself publicly in Galilee, went out of the sepulchre immediately, and ran to bring the disciples word. Luke xxiv. 8. *And they remembered his words.* Matt. xxviii. 8. *And they departed quickly from the sepulchre, with fear and great joy, (Mark, They went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre, for they trembled and were amazed) and did run to bring his disciples word.* Mark xvi. 8. *Neither said they any thing to any man; for they were afraid.* Luke xxiv. 9. *And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven.* The eleven were not all present when the women came, for Peter and John were gone to the sepulchre. Yet as it was not Luke's intention to mention every circumstance minutely, he speaks of their informing the eleven in general; though from Matthew it appears that the women did not tell these things to Peter and John till afterwards. *And to all the rest, namely, at different times.* 10. *It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles.* When the women came to the apostles this first time, Mary Magdalene was at the sepulchre with Peter and John. But her report, though made separately, is fitly joined by Luke with that of her companions, for

mise of appearing to the disciples in Galilee, here referred to, was given to the twelve apostles, Matt. xxvi. 32. yet the angels speak of it as made to the women and to all the disciples. Hence we learn, that every promise made to the apostles, which had not an immediate relation to their office and character, was really made to all the disciples, and was intended to be made known to them.



for various reasons. See § 152. Luke xxiv. 11. *And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not.* Their Master's crucifixion gave such a severe blow to their faith, that they laid aside all the thoughts which they had entertained of his being the Messiah. And therefore they had not the least expectation of his resurrection, notwithstanding he had often predicted it to them: nay, they looked upon the story which the women told them about it, as a mere chimera, the delusion of a disordered imagination."

It may seem strange, that in the accounts which the evangelists have given of our Lord's resurrection, there is not the least mention made of the disciples meeting one another by the way, although they went several times backwards and forwards in separate companies, between their lodging in the city and the sepulchre. On the contrary, the circumstances of the history oblige us to suppose that they did not meet one another. But there is nothing improbable in this at all. For as Jerusalem was a great city, the apostles lodging might be at the distance of a mile or two from that extremity of it which was nearest to the sepulchre. And, therefore, from their lodging to the sepulchre there might be several different ways through the city, all equally convenient. Farther, Calvary, where our Lord was crucified, is said to have been nigh to the city, John xix. 20. But it would be nigh, though it was at the distance of half a mile. Suppose it, however, to have been only a little more than a quarter of a mile. In this place, or nigh to it, (ὁ κήπος) was the garden where our Lord was buried, John xix. 41. Yet the garden might be on the side of Calvary that was farthest from Jerusalem. Wherefore, as it was a spacious garden, the sepulchre could not well be nearer to the city than half a mile. It may, however, have been at the distance of a whole mile consistently enough with the description which John has given of its situation. On either supposition, there may have been different roads from Joseph's villa and garden to the city. Besides, as Jerusalem was walled round, the apostles lodging might be so situated, that persons going from thence to Joseph's garden, could come out of the city by two different gates. To conclude, the garden where the sepulchre was, might have more doors than one, and several shady walks in it leading to the sepulchre. On these suppositions it is easy to imagine, that the disciples and the women who went to and from the sepulchre, may have missed each other, by taking their route through different streets of the city, or different roads in the field; or they may have been hid from one another by the shady walks of the garden in which the sepulchre stood\*.

\* Mr West seems to lay some stress on the following argument for proving the chief article of his scheme, I mean that the women went to the sepulchre in separate companies, and had different visions of angels. His argument



argument is this : on supposition that the women went in different companies, our Lord's resurrection will have additional evidence. Yet, if I mistake not, the evidence will be equally strong on supposition that the women were all in one company when the angels appeared to them. For the more persons were together when the vision was seen, the less liable were they to be deceived. Had only one person seen the angels, it might have been called an illusion of fancy. For two to have precisely the same illusion was not so easy. But that the very same train of ideas should have risen in the imaginations of such a number of persons, at one instant of time, was altogether improbable ; especially as it consisted of many particulars, and was directly opposite to all the notions which they were then impressed with. Wherefore, since the vision was thus of more length, and had a greater variety of circumstances in it, and the witnesses were more in number, the evidence of Christ's resurrection seems to be even stronger, on the supposition that the women were all in one company when the angels appeared unto them. According to the most obvious meaning of the evangelist's words, first one angel appeared, and was distinctly heard, by all the women, to say. (Matt.) *Fear not ye ; for I know that ye seek Jesus which was crucified ; he is not here, for he is risen, as he said : Come, see the place where the Lord lay.* Then going down to the bottom of the sepulchre, in consequence of his invitation, they all saw another angel, and heard the one or the other pronounce the following words, (Luke) *Why seek ye the living among the dead ? he is not here, but is risen ; remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.* Then the angel continuing his discourse, said, in the hearing of them all, (Matt.) *And go quickly, and tell his disciples (Mark, and Peter) that he is risen from the dead : and behold he goeth before you into Galilee.* (Mark) *There shall ye see him, as he said unto you.* (Matt.) *Lo, I have told you.* A vision of this length and variety of circumstances, seen, not by one or two, but six or more persons, could not possibly be an illusion or dream, and for any one to say so is ridiculous. To conclude ; on the supposition that the women were not divided into two companies, the appearance likewise of Jesus himself to them, will, for the reasons alleged, be attended with the fullest evidence.

§ CLI. *Peter and John visit the sepulchre. Mary Magdalene follows them thither, where, after they are gone, she sees first a vision of angels, and next Jesus himself ; then runs a second time into the city, to inform the rest.* Mark xvi. 9. John xx. 4,—12.

“ WHILE the women were running into the city to impart the glad tidings of the Lord's resurrection, which they had received from the angels, Peter and John were on the road to the sepulchre, having set out to examine the truth of what Mary Magdalene had told them. But happening to go by a different street, or perhaps entering the garden of the sepulchre by a different door from that through which the company of women had departed, they did not meet with them. The two disciples made all the haste they could, for they were anxious to have their doubts cleared up ; but John, being the younger man, out-ran Peter, and got to the sepulchre first. He did not however go in ; he only stooped down, and saw the rollers which had been about  
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the body. John xx. 4. *So they ran both together ; and the other disciple did out-run Peter, and came first to the sepulchre. 5. And he stooping down and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying ; yet went he not in* As Christ's feet had lain in the farthermost right corner of the sepulchre, it is natural to think, that when he revived, stood up, and put off his grave-clothes, he would leave them in that corner where they might easily be seen by John, though he did not enter, just as the women saw the angel who sat in that corner, before they descended. 6. *Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie ; 7 And the napkin that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself* After Jesus revived it was necessary that he should strip himself of the rollers, in order to his being clothed with garments fit for motion and action. Some think that he folded up the napkin to shew the perfect calmness and composure with which he arose, as out of an ordinary sleep. But whatever be in this, certain it is that he left the grave-clothes in the sepulchre, to shew that his body was not stolen away by his disciples, who, in such a case, would not have taken time to strip it. Besides, the circumstance of the grave-clothes disposed the disciples themselves to believe, when the resurrection was related to them. The garments which Jesus formed for himself, seem to have been but mean, such as he used in his life-time. For when Mary Magdalene first saw him, she took him for the gardener ; and the disciples going to Emmaus, thought him a person in rank not superior to themselves. 8. *Then went in also that other disciple which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw and believed* Finding nothing in the sepulchre but the clothes, he believed the body was taken away, as Mary Magdalene had told him. This, as I take it, is all that John means, when he tells us that Peter and he, after searching the sepulchre, *saw and believed*. Mary Magdalene, it would appear, had told them not only that the body was taken away, but that the clothes were left behind ; a circumstance which filled them with wonder. They saw them, however, with their own eyes, and believed her report. Perhaps they imagined, that Joseph or Nicodemus had removed it, after having embalmed it anew, and swathed it with other rollers than those they left behind. For that they had not the least suspicion of Christ's resurrection, is evident from the apology which John himself makes for the stupidity of the disciples in this matter. 9. *For as yet they knew not the Scripture, that he must rise again from the dead.* And as they did not know from the Scripture, nor from our Lord's own predictions, that he was to rise again, so neither could they collect it from any thing Mary Magdalene had told them ; for she herself had not the least notion of it, even when Jesus appeared to her, as is plain from what she says in  
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the 13th and 15th verses. 10. *Then the disciples went away again unto their own home.* 11. *But Mary stood without at the sepulchre, weeping.* It seems she had followed Peter and John to the sepulchre, but did not return home with them, being anxious to find the body. Accordingly, stepping down into the sepulchre to examine it again, she saw two angels sitting, the one at the head, the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. From her seeing both the angels, it is probable that she was on the second step of the stair, with an intention to descend. Or if, from her turning about and seeing Jesus, who stood without the sepulchre, it is thought she was on the threshold or first step only, with a design to look in, she may be supposed to have bowed her body so as to have had the whole cavity of the sepulchre under her eye at once. Thus she could see the two angels, who a little before had appeared in the same position to the women with the spices, (Luke xxiv. 4.) but had kept themselves invisible all the while that Peter and John were in the sepulchre. *And as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre.* 12. *And seeth two angels in white, sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.* 13. *And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.* 14. *And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, probably being affrighted, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.* The tears in her eyes, and the new garments wherewith Jesus was clad, made her at a loss to know him, till he called her by her name with his usual tone of voice. 15. *Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.* She thought they had removed him, because he was troublesome in the sepulchre. 16. *Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turneth herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni, which is to say, Master.* She knew him by his voice and countenance. Wherefore, falling down, she would have embraced his knees, (see Matt. xxviii. 9. § 152.) according to that modesty and reverence with which the women of the east saluted the men, especially those who were their superiors in station. 2 Kings iv. 27. Luke vii. 38. Matt. xxviii. 9. But Jesus refused this compliment, telling her that he was not going immediately into heaven. He was to shew himself often to his disciples before he ascended, so that she should have frequent opportunities of testifying her regard to him. Moreover, by ordering her to carry the news of his resurrection to his disciples, he insinuated that it was altogether improper to waste the time in paying him the compliments of salutation. 17. *Jesus saith unto*



unto her, \* *Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father ; but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God.* The manner in which Jesus notified his resurrection to his disciples deserves attention. He sent them a message of such a nature as to put them in mind of what he had, in his life-time, told them concerning his ascension into heaven. *Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father : Do not barely tell my disciples that I am risen from the dead, but that I am about to fulfil the promise I made them of ascending where I was before ; and that I am going to my Father's house to prepare mansions for them ; and that they can no longer doubt of these things, seeing I am risen from the dead, and thus far on my way to heaven.* Thus Jesus having finished the work of our redemption, contemplated the effects of it with singular pleasure. The blessed relation between God and man, which had been long cancelled by sin, was now happily renewed. God, who had disowned them on account of their rebellion, was again reconciled to them ; he was become their God and Father ; they were exalted to the honourable relation of Christ's brethren, and God's children ; and their Father loved them with an affection greatly superior to that of the most tender-hearted parent. The kindness of this message will appear above all praise, if we call to mind the late behaviour of the persons to whom it was sent. They had every one of them forsaken Jesus in his greatest extremity ; but he graciously forgave them, and to assure them of their pardon, called them by the endearing name of his brethren, *Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God.* Thus, Mark xvi. 9. *(Now) when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils."* See the note in p. 790.

There is something very remarkable in this passage of the history. None of the apostles or male disciples were honoured with the first visions of the angels, or with the immediate news of Christ's resurrection, far less with the first appearances of Jesus himself. The angels in the sepulchre kept themselves invisible

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\* [John 17. *Touch me not.*] In the Jewish language, *to touch* often signifies to embrace with affection and regard. Thus, Mark x. 13. "And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them," that is, express his affection to them by the imposition of his hands, accompanied with blessing ; accordingly it is added, "He took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them." Thus also, Luke viii. 38. Simon the Pharisee observing a woman that was a sinner washing Jesus' feet with her tears, and kissing them, expressed her affection by the word *αἰσθάνω*. "This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who, and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him," i. e. embraces and kisses his feet. In this sense likewise the word *touch* was used by our Lord on the present occasion.



all the while Peter and John were there. Perhaps the male disciples in general had this mark of disrespect put on them, both because they had, with shameful cowardice, forsaken their Master when he fell into the hands of his enemies, and because their faith was so weak, that they had absolutely despaired of his being Messiah when they saw him expire on the cross, Luke xxiv. 21. How different was the conduct of the women ! Laying aside the weakness and timidity natural to their sex, they shewed an uncommon magnanimity on this melancholy occasion. For in contradiction to the whole nation, who with loud voices required that Jesus should be crucified as a deceiver, they proclaimed his innocence by their tears and cries, when they saw him led out to be crucified ; accompanied him to the cross, the most infamous of all punishments ; kindly waited on him in the dolorous moments, giving him what consolation was in their power, though at the same time they could not look on him without being pierced to the very heart ; and when he expired and was carried off, they went with him to his grave, not despairing, though they found he had not delivered himself, but to appearance was conquered by death, the universal enemy of mankind. Perhaps the women entertained some faint hopes still that he would revive ; or, if they did not entertain expectations of that kind, they at least cherished a strong degree of love to their Lord, and resolved to do him all the honour in their power. This incomparable strength of faith, and love, and fortitude, expressed by the women, was distinguished with very high marks of the divine approbation. In preference to the male disciples, they were honoured with the news of Christ's resurrection, and had their eyes gladdened with the first sight of their beloved Lord after he arose, so that they preached the joyful tidings of his resurrection to the apostles themselves. There may have been other reasons also for Christ's shewing himself first to the women. The thoughts of the apostles or male disciples having run perpetually on a temporal kingdom, they had wrested all his words into an agreement with that notion ; and what they could not make consistent therewith, they seem either to have disbelieved, or to have wholly overlooked. Hence, notwithstanding Jesus had foretold his own sufferings no less than nine different times, (see vol. i. p. 42.) they were exceedingly astonished when they saw him expire. Immortality and terrestrial dominion were, in their opinion, the characteristics of Messiah ; for which reason, when they found that, instead of establishing himself in the possession of universal empire, he had not delivered himself from an handful of enemies, nor from death, they gave up all their hopes at once, Luke xxiv. 21. And as for his resurrection, they seem to have had no expectation of it at all ; in so much, that when the news of it was first brought them, they looked on it as an idle tale. It was not



so with the women. They were more submissive to their Master's instructions, John xi. 26, 27. and consequently were better prepared for seeing him after his resurrection than the apostles and other male disciples. For though they were not expecting his resurrection, they had no prejudice against it. This cannot be said of the apostles, who not only rejected the matter absolutely, at first, as a thing incredible, but even after the accounts which the soldiers had given; nay, after they had seen Jesus himself, some of them were so unreasonable as to doubt still. How much rather would their incredulity have led them to suspect his appearing as an illusion, had he shewed himself to them before the reports mentioned led them to recollect the arguments proper for disposing them to believe; particularly the prophecies that had been so often delivered, in their own hearing, concerning his resurrection. Hence the angels, when they told this event to the women, and desired them to carry the news of it to the disciples, they put them in mind of Christ's own prediction, as a confirmation of it. Hence also, before Jesus made himself known to the disciples at Emmaus, he prepared them for the discovery by expounding to them on the road the several prophecies concerning Messiah, contained in the Old Testament.

§ CLII. *The company of women set out for the sepulchre a second time, in quest of Peter and John. Jesus meets them, and bids them tell his disciples to go into Galilee, promising to shew himself unto them there. Matt. xxviii. 9, 10.*

“WHILE Peter and John, with Mary Magdalene, were at the sepulchre, the company of women returned to the city, and told as many of the disciples as they could find, that at the sepulchre they had seen a vision of angels, who assured them that Jesus was risen. This new information astonished the disciples exceedingly. Wherefore, as they had sent out Peter and John to examine the truth of what Mary Magdalene had told them concerning the body's being taken away, they would judge it more proper to send some of their number to see the angels, and hear from them the joyful tidings of which the women had given them an account. This is no conjecture, for the disciples going to Emmaus affirm expressly, that when the women came saying they had seen a vision of angels who said that Jesus was alive, certain of their number went to the sepulchre, and found it even as the women had said, but him they saw not, Luke xxiv. 22. This second deputation from the apostles did not go alone. For as Mary Magdalene returned to the sepulchre with Peter and John, who were sent to examine the truth of her information, so the women who brought word of the vision, might return with those who were sent to be witnesses to the truth of their report. Besides curiosity, they had an errand thither. The angels had ordered them



them to tell the news to Peter in particular ; for which cause, when they understood that he was gone to the sepulchre with John, it is natural to think they would return with the disciples in quest of him. About the time that these disciples and the women set out for the sepulchre, Peter and John seem to have reached the city. But coming in by a different street they did not meet their brethren. The disciples being eager to get to the sepulchre, soon left the women behind, and just as they arrived, Mary Magdalene, having seen the Lord, was coming away. But they did not meet with her, perhaps because they entered the garden at one door, while she was coming out by another. When they came to the sepulchre they saw the angels, and received from them the news of Christ's resurrection ; for, Luke xxiv. 24. *they found it even as the women had said.* Highly elated therefore with their success, they departed and ran back to the city so quickly, that they had given an account of what had happened to them in the hearing of the two disciples who were going to Emmaus, before Mary Magdalene arrived. Nor will their speed appear incredible, if Mary Magdalene came up with her companions after their interview with Jesus ; for in that case it is natural to think, that they would all stand still a little, and relate to one another what they had seen. Or though Mary Magdalene did not overtake the women, yet considering the nature of the tidings which the male disciples had to carry, we may believe that they would exert their utmost speed in running ; and that, neglecting the high road, they would take the nearest way through the fields. Besides, it ought to be remembered that Mary Magdalene, however eager she might be to carry the joyful news, was, by reason of her sex, not so fit for running as the male disciples, and that her dress might retard her ; not to mention that she was tired, having watched all night, and been at the sepulchre once before.

“ In the mean time, the company of women who followed the disciples happening not to meet Peter and John, who were now on the road home, went forward in quest of them. But the women did not go on to the sepulchre, for somewhere on the road Jesus himself met them. Matt. xxviii. 9. *And as they went to tell his disciples, behold Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came, and held him by the feet, and worshipped him.* This favour of embracing his knees Jesus had refused to Mary Magdalene, (p. 807.) because it was not necessary ; but he granted it to the women, because the angels' words having strongly impressed their minds with the notion of his resurrection, they might have taken his appearing for an illusion of their own imagination, had he not permitted them to handle him, and convince themselves by the united reports of their senses. Besides, if our Lord intended that Mary Magdalene should go away as fast as possible,

and .



and publish the news, he might hinder her from embracing his knees, to prevent her losing time, as was observed above. 10. *Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid : go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.*" See on Matt. xxviii. 7. § 150. and on John xx. 17. § 151.

That the company of women were returning from the city to the sepulchre when Jesus met them, is highly probable for the following reasons: 1. On supposition that he met them as they went into the city to give an account of the vision of angels, it is inconceivable how they came to omit telling that they had seen the Lord himself \*. For that they did not speak a word of this, is evident from Luke xxiv. 9, 11. compared with verse 23. 2. That Mary and Salome, with their companions, were returning to the sepulchre when Jesus met them, is probable, not only because

\* This difficulty appeared so important to the ingenious Mr West, that to remove it he formed his scheme of two companies of women that went to the sepulchre at different times; one under the direction of Mary Magdalene, and the other of Joanna. He supposes that Mary Magdalene's company, whom she left at the sepulchre, having seen the one angel of whom Matthew and Mark speak, departed, and met Jesus as they went into the city. But that Joanna and her company who came to the sepulchre after they were gone, having seen the vision of two angels whereof Luke speaks, made such haste into the town, that two of the disciples, in whole hearing they rehearsed the story, had time to set out for Emmaus, before the other company, who had been first at the sepulchre, arrived with the news of their having seen Jesus. But this scheme is encumbered with great difficulties. For, first, Mary the mother of James, and Salome, are said, Luke xxiv. 10. to have concurred in the report concerning the vision of angels; directly contrary to Mr West, who is obliged to suppose that that report was made by Joanna and her company, without Mary and Salome. The reason is, Mary and Salome were the women to whom our Lord himself appeared, as they went to tell the disciples concerning the vision of angels; and therefore they cannot be supposed to have concurred with Joanna in her report concerning that vision, because having seen the Lord, they would much rather have told that fact than any thing else. In the second place, Mr West is obliged to suppose that Mary and Salome, though first at the sepulchre, lingered so long on the road, that Joanna and her company got to the city before them; which is very improbable, as no reason can be assigned which could occasion this delay, and many may be mentioned which ought to have prevented it. Mr West indeed mentions their fear as the cause of it. But this is a most improbable reason, being confuted both by Matthew and Mark. Matthew says, xxviii. 8. "They departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy, and did run to bring his disciples word." Their fear, as it is natural to think, added to their speed, and their desire to communicate the news, would hinder them from tarrying by the way; not to mention that the angel had ordered them to make all the haste they could into the city. Mark says, xvi. 8. "They went out quickly and fled from the sepulchre, for they trembled and were amazed; neither said they any thing to any man, for they were afraid." They were now in such haste, that they did not wait to give the common salutation to those they met on the road and in the streets. Wherefore it is not at all credible that these women lingered on the road such a space of time as Mr West on his scheme is obliged to suppose.



because the supposition of this circumstance entirely removes all the difficulties which arise upon comparing the several accounts that are given of our Lord's resurrection; but also because the Greek word wherewith his appearance unto them is introduced implies it. *And as they went to tell his disciples, behold Jesus met them, ἀπαύτην αὐταῖς.* I imagine the evangelist could not have expressed himself in this manner with any propriety, had our Lord, after shewing himself to Mary Magdalene at the sepulchre, followed the women, and overtaken them as they were going into the town. The words made use of by Luke, xxiv. 15. to express his overtaking the disciples on the road to Emmaus, would in that case have been much more proper; ἐγγίσας συνιπτοῦντο. 3. That the women were returning to the sepulchre when Jesus met them, will appear highly probable, if the things that happened between their leaving the sepulchre and Christ's appearing to them are considered. In that period John first came to the sepulchre and looked in, but did not go down; then Peter came, and descending, examined the rollers; upon this John likewise went down and viewed them. The two having thus satisfied their curiosity, departed, leaving Mary Magdalene there weeping. After the apostles were gone, she saw first two angels who conversed with her, and then Jesus himself who gave her a message to his disciples. But as such a variety of incidents must have taken up some considerable time \*, is it reasonable to suppose that the women spent it all in going part of the road between the sepulchre and the city, notwithstanding the angel ordered them to go quickly, and they are said to have run to bring his disciples word? The improbability of such a supposition is heightened by the circumstance taken notice of, John xix. 20. that the sepulchre was nigh to the city. It seems they had but a little way to travel. Wherefore it is much more natural to believe, that the women had delivered the angel's message before Jesus appeared to them, and were going to the sepulchre a second time when he met them. The words, Matt. xxviii. 9. (Ὡς δὲ παρῆντο ἐπαγγεῖλαι τοῖς μαθηταῖς) *As they went to tell his disciples*, are not in the least contrary to this supposition; for the women were still in quest of Peter and John to give them the news, consequently the evangelist might very properly say that Jesus met them as they went to tell his disciples, notwithstanding they had spoken of the vision before to such of them as they found in the town †.

\* Mr West's scheme gives still greater strength to this argument, by the addition of another visit performed within the period under consideration. For, according to him, after Mary Magdalene was departed, Joanna came with her company of women, and having seen and conversed with the angels mentioned by Luke, arrived at the apostles lodging a considerable time before the first company came thither.

† To the scheme of harmony offered above, it may be objected, that the space



space of time in which the transactions relating to our Lord's resurrection must have happened, will not admit of so many journeys to the sepulchre as I have supposed. But the answer is, that upon examination these transactions will be found to have taken up a greater space of time than is commonly imagined; and that the history has furnished us with two marks by which we can form some judgment of its length. 1. The first is Matt. xxviii. 11. where we are told, that while the women were returning from their interview with Jesus, "some of the watch came into the city, and shewed all the things that were done unto the chief priests," that is, to a number of the chief priests gathered together. No doubt the soldiers went first to the high priest, and told him what had happened. But it is not this which the evangelist speaks of. It seems the high priest, after having given the watch a private audience, sent for such of the chief priests as he could most confide in, and made the soldiers relate their story before them. Perhaps he hoped, with their assistance, to convict the men of telling a falsehood; or he might propose to deliberate with his friends concerning the measures proper to be taken on this emergency. Since, therefore, the women returned from their interview with Jesus about the time that the watch shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done, the day must have been then pretty far advanced; for it is not to be supposed that the servants at the palace would suffer the soldiers to disturb the high priest very early, or though they did, some hours must have passed before such a number of the chief priests could be brought together as the high priest would judge necessary to assist him in an affair of this importance. 2. We have a second mark of time in the history of the two disciples who travelled to Emmaus. For we are told, Luke xxiv. 29. that when they arrived at the village whither they went, they constrained their Master to abide with them, because it was towards evening, and the day was far spent. But Emmaus was only threescore furlongs, (ver. 13) or about seven miles and an half from Jerusalem. If so, it must have been late in the morning when the disciples set out; and yet we know that they had left Jerusalem before any of the women arrived from their interview with Jesus. Wherefore it is extremely probable that when our Lord shewed himself to the women, the day was advanced; as all the other circumstances likewise of the history lead us to suppose.

§ CLIII. *The guards inform the priests of Christ's resurrection.*  
Matt. xxviii. 11,—15.

"THE women thus ordered by Jesus himself to carry the tidings of his resurrection into the city, went no farther in quest of Peter; but being now charged with a more important message, turned back immediately to publish the glad tidings of their having seen the Lord. Matt. xxviii. 11. *Now when they were going, behold some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done:* that is, gave them an account of the earthquake, the vision, the rolling away of the stone. Moreover, they assured them that Jesus was actually risen from the dead. The chief priests having received this report, called the whole senate together, and consulted among themselves what they were to do. The deliberations, however, of the meeting were not kept secret. They were reported to the disciples, perhaps by Joseph and Nicodemus, two members of the council, who were our Lord's friends. That the soldiers in-

formed



formed the priests of Christ's resurrection, cannot be doubted by any one who considers the measure which they took after deliberating upon the affair. 12. *And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money* (i. e. a great bribe) *unto the soldiers,* 13. *Saying, say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept.* It is true, Mark xvi. 9. is generally interpreted in such a manner as to make us think the soldiers did not see Jesus arise. Yet, if I mistake not, that interpretation is without foundation. Mark's words are, *Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene.* Our Lord's first appearance, therefore, after his resurrection, was to Mary. This might be said consistently enough with the soldiers seeing him arise; for that was no appearance after his resurrection; it was his resurrection itself. In the mean time, though the soldiers did not see him rise, they were able to bear witness unto his resurrection. The storm, the earthquake, and the vision that accompanied this astonishing event, had driven them away from the sepulchre. Impelled, therefore, by their fears and the weather, they would take shelter in the first house they could find. And as they fled away about the time that Jesus arose, they would probably sleep till morning. Or, though the terror they were in hindered them from sleeping, they would stay nevertheless, having no inclination to go out in such a stormy night, especially as they knew that the gates of the city were shut, and that they could not have access to the chief priests at so unreasonable an hour. When the day advanced, and their fears were a little abated, we may suppose they began to deliberate among themselves what they were to do. They had been placed at the sepulchre, to see if Jesus would arise according to his prediction, and to prevent any fraud by which his resurrection might be imposed upon the world. Wherefore, if they did not see him arise, they could not but be curious to know whether he was really risen, as the terrible things they had been witnesses to the preceding evening seemed to presage; and for this purpose they might go straightway to the sepulchre in the morning, but not finding the body, they concluded with reason that Jesus was risen, and went to tell the priests the strange news. Thus the soldiers were qualified to bear witness unto the resurrection of Jesus, although they did not see him arise; and their testimony is unquestionable, being the testimony of enemies. Accordingly, the priests did not offer to contradict them, as they would certainly have done had it been in their power. But by an obstinacy almost incredible, rooted in their pride, they stiffly resisted what their own mind told them was true; and to save their reputation bribed the soldiers to tell every where, that while they slept in the night his disciples came and stole him away. The priests  
certainly



certainly could not but foresee what judgment reasonable persons would form of this report. At best, it was nothing but the soldiers own conjecture, who, by their own confession, being asleep when the thing happened, could tell no more of the matter than other people, or, if they pretended to more, it was absurd; for how could they know what was doing, and by whom, while they were asleep? or, knowing it, why did they not awake and prevent it? But the absurdity of this lie was so glaring, that it is a wonder the priests did not rather hire the soldiers to say the disciples filled them so drunk that they fell into a dead sleep; this at least would have rendered it probable that they stole him away. But even this form of the lie was obnoxious to insuperable objections; for though a single person or two may be seduced to betray their trust, a great number are not so easily drawn astray. Among such a number of men as the watch consisted of, some will always be found tinctured with a sense of duty. Moreover, the numerousness of the guard prevented the priests from turning the falsehood into any other shape. The soldiers could not, with any probability, say that the disciples took the body from them by force; for though a handful of people may be so overpowered by a multitude, that they cannot possibly make any resistance, a number of people well armed may fight a superior force; and though they should be overcome, still there will be visible proofs of the attack that was made upon them; lives will be lost, or at least wounds received. In the case of the guards at the sepulchre nothing of this kind was to be seen, whereby it could be made appear that they were attacked; and therefore an assault from the disciples could not be pretended. Nor would the soldiers be prevailed with to spread a report which demonstrated them to have been arrant cowards. In short, the disciples stealing away the body while the guards slept, absurd as it might seem to persons of discernment, was the best colour the priests could put on this affair\*. Unluckily, however, for the cause of infidelity, it was

\* The absurdity of the disciples taking away the body, whether by stealth or force, will clearly appear likewise, if we attend to their temper, and to the circumstances of the case. Far from entertaining any expectation of their Master's rising again from the dead, they understood none of the predictions which he emitted concerning it. And when they were informed of it by the women, their words appeared to them as idle tales, and they believed them not. Nay, when Jesus himself came and stood in the midst of them, they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. In this temper, is it probable that they would form the design of imposing upon the world the belief of their Master's resurrection, an event which they had not the least expectation of themselves? In the second place, when Jesus was apprehended, his disciples were so full of fears for their own safety, that they all forsook him and fled. One of the most courageous of them, who followed him into the high priest's house, being asked if he was one of his disciples, was so terrified that he denied three times, and with oaths, his having any knowledge of



was only some of the watch who came to the chief priests to be tutored, the rest had gone to their garrison, where no doubt they told their comrades what had happened. And even those who came to the high priest had tarried by the way. Part of the night was spent in the house where they had taken shelter, and to the people of that house they had told the true matter of fact. None can doubt this who attends to the nature and operation of human passions. Nor would they be silent as they passed through the streets, if they chanced to meet any of their acquaintance. Far less would they conceal the matter in the high priest's palace, while they waited to be called in. It does not appear that the soldiers, either on the score of conscience, or on account of the palpable falsehood of the story they were to propagate, refused the bribe that was offered them by the chief priests. Their love of money, as is common with wicked men, pushed them on headlong. They did not mind the improbability of a numerous guard of soldiers all fast asleep at once, nor the horrid iniquity of the lie. And though they had been greatly confounded with the vision of angels, the panic was by this time worn off. Besides, they did not consider the vision as connected with morality; or if they did, the priests would endeavour to persuade them, that it was nothing real, but the mere effect of their own imagination, terrified by seeing one rise from the dead. The only objection made by the soldiers to the proposal of the priests was, that by publishing such a story they acknowledged the grossest neglect of

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of him. The rest, during his punishment, skulked among the crowd, except John, who ventured to appear among the women at his cross. In the whole they were only eleven; a handful of men who had not been trained to arms. To suppose that a company of this sort either formed or executed the project of stealing away their Master's body, from a sepulchre hewn out of a rock, to which there was only one entry, and that guarded by a numerous band of armed soldiers, is altogether improbable. In the third place, the stealing away of the body by the disciples is absurd, for this reason likewise, that though they had, contrary to all probability, been successful in their design, it would have answered no purpose in the world. The disciples had all along considered Messiah as a great temporal prince, and they had followed their Master in hopes that he would become this great prince, and raise them to the first posts in his kingdom. Accordingly, when they saw him expire upon the cross, their hopes were all blasted at once. This they themselves honestly confessed: "We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel." Wherefore, to have stolen away the dead body of their Master could serve none of the views by which the disciples were now actuated, even though thereby they could have imposed the belief of his resurrection upon the world. It did not raise him to universal dominion; it did not put them in possession of riches or power. And with respect to the use which they made afterwards of their Master's resurrection, in converting the world, they had not the most distant conception of it at the time they fixed for his resurrection. Upon the whole, the stealing away of the body by the disciples while the guards slept, is, in all the lights wherein it can be viewed, the most idle, inconsistent, and improbable story imaginable.



duty, for which, if the story reached the governor's ears, he would punish them severely. But to make them easy on this head, the priests promised to give such a representation of the matter to Pilate, that no harm should befall them. This only obstacle, therefore, being removed, the soldiers did as they were desired. They told every where the lie which the priests had put into their mouth. A lie the most impudent and barefaced that could be contrived, but which the senate was anxious to have propagated, because they hoped it would be swallowed by many without examination. Nor were they deceived in their expectation; for, improbable as the story was, it gained general credit among the enemies of Jesus, and was currently reported at the time Matthew wrote his gospel. Matt. xxviii. 14. *And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you* 15. *So they took the money, and did as they were taught. And this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.* It is evident that, as matters stood, the day must have been pretty far advanced before the soldiers could come into the city. And, therefore, though they fled from the sepulchre about eleven or twelve o'clock the preceding night, we have a better reason for their coming so late in the morning, as is affirmed by Matthew, than if we suppose that Jesus arose when the women went out in a body to the sepulchre at the rising of the sun."

§ CLIV. *Mary Magdalene, and the company of women, return from their several interviews with Jesus. Peter runs to the sepulchre a second time, and as he returns, sees the Lord.* Mark xvi. 10, 11. Luke xxiv. 12. John xx. 18. 1 Cor. xv. 5.

"THE company of women having tarried a while with Jesus on the road, by the time that they got back to the apostles, not only Peter and John, but the other disciples were returned from the sepulchre. Perhaps Mary Magdalene likewise was come, for she might easily pass by the women if she travelled in another road. Besides, it is natural to think that she would make all the haste possible, especially as Jesus, for this very purpose, had not permitted her to embrace his knees, as was observed above. Or we may suppose that Mary Magdalene overtook the women on the road, and brought them up with her, after spending a little time in relating to one another what they had seen. It is not material, however, which of them came first, only arriving about the same time, they confirmed each other's accounts. John xx. 18. *Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples (Mark, as they mourned and wept) that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.* But if the things which the women formerly told concerning the vision of angels, appeared in  
the



the eyes of the disconsolate disciples as idle tales, what they now said was reckoned much more so. Mark xvi. 11. *And they, when they heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not.* Only Peter, to whom they repeated the angel's message, because he had been absent when they first came with it, was disposed by his sanguine temper to give a little more credit to their words than the rest seem to have done. For on hearing that the heavenly beings had named him in particular, as one to whom the news should be told, he was much elated with the honour they had done him. And though he was but just come from the sepulchre, he thought proper to go thither a second time, hoping perhaps to see Jesus, or at least the angel who had distinguished him by making mention of his name. Luke xxiv. 12. *Then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulchre; and stooping down he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass."*

Luke relates Peter's second visit immediately after the account which he has given of the women's first report. But it does not follow from hence, that this visit was made immediately after that report, or in consequence thereof; as those who are acquainted with the manner of writing peculiar to the evangelists very well know. Peter indeed made a visit to the sepulchre, in consequence of Mary Magdalene's first information concerning the body's being taken away, the history of which John has given. But it was different from this. 1. Because he then had heard of nothing but the taking away of the body; whereas now the women had told him of the vision of angels, which said that Jesus was risen. 2. Because at the visit mentioned by John, he went down into the sepulchre, and searched it; whereas at this he only looked in, knowing that if the angels had been visible, they would have appeared immediately. And as for the body, he had fully satisfied his curiosity at the first visit, and was confirmed in the belief of its being away, by seeing the clothes in the same situation as before. 3. Because in returning from this second visit, he is represented as wondering *at that which was come to pass*; a circumstance which might more naturally be expected to happen now than formerly. The reason is, when he made the first visit he had no thought of the resurrection, and so considered the taking away of the body only as an ordinary occurrence; but now that the women had told him of their having seen angels who assured them that Jesus was alive, he viewed the absence of the body, and the posture of the clothes, in a quite different light, and was struck with wonder. See more on this subject in the Commentary on Luke xxiv. 24. § 153. Our Lord's appearance to Peter, mentioned 1 Cor. xv. 5. may have happened as he was returning from the sepulchre this second time;







urrection. Besides, their thoughts were so swallowed up in the depth of their grief, that as they took little notice of any thing without them, so they did not narrowly examine the features of their fellow traveller. Jesus therefore spake to them in the character of a stranger, making free, as travellers might do with one another, to ask what the subject of their conversation was, and why they looked so sad? Luke xxiv. 17. *And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk and are sad?* 18 *And one of them, whose name was Cleophas, answering, said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?* Cleophas was surprised that any one who had come from Jerusalem should have been ignorant of the extraordinary things which had lately happened there. 19 *And he said unto them, What things?* And they said unto him, *Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God, and all the people:* 20. *And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him.* Having thus given an account of Christ's character, miracles, and sufferings, Cleophas was so ingenuous as to acknowledge, that they once believed him to be the deliverer of Israel, and in that faith had been his disciples; but that they began now to think themselves mistaken, because he had been dead three days. 21. *But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel; and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done.* Cleophas added, that some women of their acquaintance, who had been that morning at the sepulchre, astonished them with the news of his resurrection, affirming that they had seen a vision of angels, which told them he was alive. It seems his companion and he had left the city before any of the women came with the news of Christ's personal appearance. 22. *Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre:* 23. *And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive."*

The smallest attention will shew, that Cleophas and his companion do not here speak of Mary Magdalene's second information, given after she had seen the angels, because Jesus himself having appeared to her before she stirred from the spot, it is by no means probable that she would tell the lesser, and omit the greater event. Neither do they speak of the information which the company of women, Mary Magdalene's companions, gave the apostles, after they had seen Jesus, because they in like manner must have related that much rather than any thing else. But the report of which they speak was either made by a company of women different from that in which Mary the mother of James

and



and Salome were, who saw Jesus as they went to tell his disciples concerning the vision of angels; or it was made by that company before they saw the Lord. That it was not made by any company different from that in which Mary and Salome were, is certain, because Luke says expressly, that Mary, Salome, Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and the rest, concurred in giving it, chap. xxiv. 10. Wherefore it must have been the report which Mary Magdalene made alone, after having been with the women at the sepulchre the first time, and which they confirmed before they saw the Lord, as has been shewed § 152. According to this account of the matter indeed, the report which Mary Magdalene made alone, is not distinguished from that of her companions, Mary, Salome, and Joanna. Yet there seems to be a hint given of it in the first clause of the verse under consideration. For the words, *And when they found not his body*, may refer to Mary Magdalene's first information; as the subsequent words, *They came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels*, describe the information given by her companions. In the mean time, though it should be allowed that Mary Magdalene's report is not distinguished from that of her companions, either by Luke in his history of the resurrection, or by the disciples going to Emmaus, it will not follow that her report was made at the same time with theirs, or that the evangelist meant to say so. For though they were distinct in point of time, they might fitly be joined together, for four reasons: 1. Because the persons who made them had gone out in one company to the sepulchre. 2. Because they were made soon after each other. 3. Because the subject of both was the same. Mary Magdalene first brought word that the stone was rolled back, that the door was open, and the body gone. The other women came immediately after her, and told the same things; adding, that they had seen a vision of angels, which affirmed that Jesus was alive. 4. In telling their story to this supposed stranger, the two disciples would think it needless to make the distinction more particularly. But if the disciples, in their account of these reports, joined them together for the reasons mentioned, the evangelist Luke might, for the same reasons, speak of them as one in his history of Christ's resurrection, agreeably to the brevity which he has studied throughout the whole of his work. See on Luke xxiv. 9. § 150.

Luke xxiv. 24. "*And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said; but him they saw not.*" When the women who had been at the sepulchre told us, that they had seen angels who assured them that Jesus was risen, some of our number went thither in great haste, hoping to see these angels, as the women told them that they were in the sepulchre when they came away. On their arrival they found it even as the women had said; for they were favoured



favoured with a sight of the angels, but had not the pleasure of seeing Jesus."

This is generally understood of the journey which Peter and John made to the sepulchre, immediately after Mary Magdalene's first report, but with what truth may be questioned. The reason is, at that journey Peter and John had heard nothing of the vision of angels, which the disciples here mentioned are said expressly to have been informed of. Luke indeed tells us of a second journey which Peter made to the sepulchre; and this some have supposed to be the journey which the disciples going to Emmaus had in their eye, because it is related immediately after the report of the women concerning the angels, as if it had happened in consequence of that report. Nevertheless, the series of the history discovers the fallacy of this supposition. For when the women came into the city, after having seen the angels, both Peter and John were at the sepulchre, and did not return before the women set out the second time. If so, neither Peter nor John had any opportunity of hearing from the women's own mouth what they had to say concerning the vision, till the latter were able to add the still more welcome news of their having seen the Lord. Wherefore, since the disciples of whom Cleophas and his companion speak, had heard nothing of Christ's appearing to the women, Peter could not be one of them. It may be said indeed, that immediately on his return from the sepulchre he went back again with John, or some other of the disciples, in consequence of the women's report delivered to him at second hand by his brethren. Yet this is not very probable, because the disciples in question must have ran so fast, as to return from the sepulchre and make their report, before either Mary Magdalene or the company of women came from their several interviews with Jesus. Of this, I think, no doubt can be made, since Cleophas, who left the city before the women arrived, tells us he had heard that report.

Luke xxiv. 25. "*Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! 26. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?*" From this reproof it would appear, that Cleophas and his companion were of the number of those who gave little credit to the tidings which the women had brought of their Master's resurrection. His crucifixion and death, at they themselves acknowledged, having almost convinced them that he was not the Messiah, they had little faith in his resurrection. Wherefore, to shew them their error, Jesus reproved them sharply for not understanding and believing the prophecies, which, said he, declare it to be the decree of heaven, that before Messiah enters into his glory, that is, before he receives his kingdom, he must suffer such things as you say your Master has suffered.—Moreover, that  
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his reproof might appear well founded, that their drooping spirits might be supported, and that they might be prepared for the discovery he was about to make of himself, he explained the whole types and prophecies of the Old Testament which relate to Messiah's sufferings; such as the Mosaic sacrifices, the lifting up of the brazen serpent, the 22d Psalm, the 53d of Isaiah, &c. 27. *And beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures, the things concerning himself.* Thus did Jesus demonstrate to his desponding disciples, from the Scriptures, that their despair was without cause, and the suspicion without foundation, which they had taken up of his being a deceiver, because the priests had put him to death. His discourse made a deep impression on them, (ver. 32.) and engrossed their attention to such a degree, that they neither thought of the length of the journey, nor considered the countenance of him who spake to them; so that, ere they were aware, they arrived at the village whither they went. And now the disciples turned aside from the road to go to their lodging, Jesus in the mean time travelling on. But they, loth to part with a person whose conversation charmed them so much, begged him to go no farther, but to abide with them, because the day was far spent. Luke xiv. 28. *And they drew nigh unto the village whither they went; and he made as though he would have gone further.* 29. *But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us, for it is towards evening\*, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.* By their hearty invitations, the disciples prevailed with their fellow-traveller to turn in with them; and their humanity met with an abundant recompence, for Jesus made himself known to them at table, in the action of giving God thanks for their food. 30. *And it came to pass as he sat at meat with them, he took bread and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.* Because it is said, that "as he sat at meat he took bread, and blessed it," &c. some have thought that our Lord gave his two disciples the sacrament on this occasion, adding it to the ordinary meal they were

\* Ver. 29. *It is towards evening, and the day is far spent.*] In the following section we are told, that the disciples having returned from Emmaus, were telling their brethren what had happened to them, when Jesus stood in the midst and saluted them. Moreover, it is taken notice of that this appearance happened the first day of the week, at even. These circumstances, together with the departure of the disciples who went to Emmaus before the news of Christ's resurrection had reached the city shew plainly, that by the evening, in the above passage, we are to understand the first evening of the Jewish day, which began at three o'clock. (Matt. xiv. 15. § 60.) *It is towards evening*, that is, *it is towards three o'clock*; and *the day is far spent*; *καταλυστή ἡ ἡμέρα*, the day has declined. For, on any other supposition, the two could not have returned to Jerusalem, after dining at Emmaus, so as to have been present when Jesus shewed himself to his disciples the first day of the week, which ended at sun-setting. See note, p. 814.



were eating, as at the first institution of the rite, and that they knew him thereby to be Jesus. But in the Greek there is no foundation for the conjecture, the words signifying properly, *And it came to pass that when he sat down to table with them, he took bread, and blessed it, &c.* Among the Jews the giving of thanks at table for their food, and the distributing of it to the guests, was the head of the family's office; but in mixed companies, he whose rank and character rendered him most worthy of the honours of the table obtained them. The actions therefore of blessing, breaking, and dividing the meat, happened of course at every meal, and at this were fitly yielded to their Master by the disciples, although they did not know him; because the singular skill in the sacred writings which he had discovered on the road made them conceive a very high opinion of his piety and learning. Jesus being thus desired by his disciples to address God in their behalf, he discovered himself either by pronouncing a form of prayer which they had often heard him use, and which, when repeated by this stranger, awakened their attention; so that, considering his features more narrowly, they knew him to be the Lord. This is Calvin's account. Or they might be led to the discovery, if in his prayer Jesus uttered such things as made him known. 31. *And their eyes were opened, and they knew him: \* and he vanished out of their sight.* Though our Lord's departure is mentioned immediately after we are told how he discovered himself, it does not follow that he went away immediately upon the discovery. This is the manner of the sacred historians. We may therefore suppose that he staid some time conversing with the two disciples, and proving to them the reality of his resurrection. The reflection which the disciples made on this affair is natural and beautiful. Luke xxiv. 32. *They said one to another, Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?* We were extremely stupid not to know him, when we found his discourses have that effect upon us which was peculiar to his teaching. As soon as Jesus departed, the two disciples made all the haste they could to Jerusalem, that they might have the pleasure of acquainting their brethren with the agreeable news. But they were in some measure prevented. For immediately on their arrival,

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\* Ver. 31. *And he vanished out of their sight.*] Αφαντος ὤντο απ' αυτων. The scholiast upon Euripides exp'ains αφαντος ὤντο by αφανης ὤντο, a phrase used by Josephus to signify one's escaping or getting out of sight, lib. xx. c. 8 § 6. διαδραμας ex τας μαχας, αφανης ὤντο. Besides, the learned Dr Sam. Chandler has produced passages from Anacreon and Pindar, in which the word αφαντος is used to signify the sudden disappearing of an object, by what means soever that happens. He proposes, therefore, to correct the translation thus, *He suddenly went away from them:* that is to say, he slipped out of their company, without bidding them farewell, or signifying that he was not to return.



rival, the eleven, with the women, accosted them, giving them the news of their Master's resurrection. 33. *And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven* (see on John xx. 24. p. 829.) *gathered together, and them that were with them ; 34. Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.* The apostles had given little credit to the reports of the women, supposing they were occasioned more by imagination than reality. But when a person of Simon's capacity and gravity declared that he had seen the Lord, they began to think that he was risen indeed. Their belief, therefore, was not a little confirmed by the arrival of the two disciples, who declared that the Lord had appeared to them also. 35. *And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread ;* that is, by his prayer before meat. Mark however represents the reception which their report met with somewhat differently, xvi. 12. *After that he appeared in another form, ἑν ἑτέρῳ μορφῇ, i. e. in another dress, the dress of a traveller, unto two of them, as they walked and went into the country. 13. And they went and told it unto the residue ; neither believed they them.* But there is no inconsistency between the evangelists ; for though the greatest part of the apostles believed that Jesus was arisen, as Luke affirms, some, who had not given credit either to the women or to Simon, continued obstinately to disbelieve, in spite of all that the two disciples or the rest could say. This seems to be a better method of reconciling Mark and Luke, than to suppose that on Peter's information the apostles believed Jesus was risen, but did not believe that he had appeared to the two disciples, because, according to their own account of the matter, they did not know him at first, and because at parting he had vanished out of their sight. For I ask the reader, whether it is not natural to think that the disciples, who on this occasion were more than twenty in number, would not divide in their opinions upon such a subject as the resurrection of their Master from the dead ; some believing it, others rejecting it. We know from Luke himself, that a few did not believe even after they had seen Jesus with their own eyes, chap. xxxiv. 41. see also Matt. xxviii. 17. It is therefore no straining of the text to suppose, that by the eleven's saying, *The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Peter*, Luke means only some of the eleven, perhaps the greatest part of them said so. Besides, we must understand the evangelist's words in a limited sense, because Peter, of whom he speaks, was himself one of the eleven." See on Matt. xxvii. 44. § 146.



§ CLVI. *Jesus appears to his apostles on the evening of the day whereon he arose; Thomas being absent.* Luke xxiv. 36,—43. John xx. 19,—25.

“WHILE the disciples from Emmaus were giving their brethren an account of the Lord’s appearing to them, and offering arguments to convince those who doubted the truth of it, Jesus himself came in, and put an end to their debate by shewing them his hands and his feet. Luke xxiv. 36. *And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them.* The expression, *ἑστηκεν ἐν μέσῳ αὐτῶν*, signifies that he stood among them, without intimating whether they saw him come forward, or did not observe him till he was near them. John however mentions a circumstance, which, compared with Luke’s account, seems to prove that they saw him enter the room, and come forward. John xx. 19. *Then the same day at evening,* (see on Luke xxiv. 29. § 155.) *being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, came Jesus, and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.* Luke xxiv. 37. *But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.* The disciples had secured the doors of the house by locks and bolts, as well as they could, for fear of the Jews. But Jesus, before he entered, opened the locks and drew the bolts by his miraculous power, (see Prelim. Observ. II. No. i. p. 30.) without the knowledge of any in the house. Wherefore, as the whole company knew that the doors had been secured, it was no wonder that they supposed they saw a spectre, and were exceedingly affrighted, when something in a human form, whose features they could not easily discern by the evening light, entered the room. Thus the circumstance of the doors being shut is very happily mentioned by John, because it suggests the reason why the disciples took Jesus for a spirit, as Luke tells us, notwithstanding the greatest part of them believed he was risen, and were conversing about his resurrection at that very instant. To dispel their fears and doubts, Jesus came forward, spake to them, and shewed them his hands and feet, desiring them to handle him, and be convinced by the united report of their senses, that it was he. 38. *And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?* 39. *Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have.* 40. *And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet,* (John, and his side). The disciples beholding these infallible proofs of their Master’s resurrection, received him with exultation and rapture. But their joy and wonder so wrought upon their minds, that some of them, sensible of the commotion they were in, suspended their belief till they had considered the matter more calmly. Jesus, therefore,



therefore, knowing their thoughts, called for meat, and did eat with them, to prove more fully the certain truth of his resurrection from the dead, and the reality of his presence with them on this occasion. (See on Matt. xxviii. 16. § 159.) Luke xxiv. 41. *And while they yet believed not for joy, (John, Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord) and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? 42. And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an boneycomb. 43. And he took it, and did eat before them.* He tarried so long with them, that they had time to make ready some fish for supper, which he took a share of. John xx. 21. *Then said Jesus unto them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. I send you to preach the gospel, and teach men the way of salvation, for which purpose I honour you with an authority and commission from God, and bestow on you power to confirm your doctrine and mission by miracles. 22. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, (see on Matt. xviii. 2. § 74.) and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.* Luke, ver. 35. informs us, that the disciples from Emmaus told their brethren on this occasion what things were done in the way. Among the rest, no doubt they repeated the interpretations which Jesus gave of the prophecies concerning his own sufferings and death. But such a sense of the Scriptures being diametrically opposite to the notions which the Jews in general entertained, a peculiar illumination of the Spirit was necessary to enable the apostles to discern it. This illumination they now received from Jesus, who, in token that he bestowed it, breathed upon them, and bade them receive it. The effect of this illumination was, that by perceiving the agreeableness of the things which had befallen him with the ancient prophecies concerning Messiah, their minds were quieted, and they were fitted to judge of the present appearance, and of the other appearances which Jesus was to make before his ascension. Farther, the expression, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost*, may have a relation not only to the illumination of the Spirit which they now received, but to those which they were to receive afterwards, and in greater measure. Accordingly it is added, 23. *Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.* This may refer to the temporal pardon and punishment of mens sins. (See on Matt. xvi. 19. § 70.) Or the meaning may be, Ye are soon to receive the Holy Ghost in the fulness of his communications, whereby you shall understand the will of God for mens salvation in the most comprehensive manner, and so be qualified to declare the only terms on which mens sins are to be pardoned. Some indeed carry the matter higher, supposing that this is the power of what they call *authoritative absolution*. Yet the only foundation on which the apostles themselves could claim such a power, must



must either have been the gift of discerning spirits, which they enjoyed after the effusion of the Holy Ghost, 1 Cor. xii. 10. and by which they knew the secret thoughts of mens hearts, consequently the reality of their repentance; or it must have been some infallible communication of the will of God concerning mens future state that was made to them. For, properly speaking, they neither forgave nor retained sins, they only declared a matter of fact infallibly made known to them by God. In the mean time, to render this interpretation feasible, the general expressions, "Whose soever sins ye remit," &c. must be very much limited, since it was but a single individual here and there, whose condition in the life to come can be supposed to have been made known to the apostles by revelation. John xx. 24. *But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, i. e. the twin, was not with them when Jesus came.* It is said, Luke xxiv. 33. that the disciples from Emmaus told their story to *the eleven*, and to them that were with them. The eleven was the name by which the apostles went after the death of Judas, whether they were precisely that number or fewer. Wherefore we are under no necessity, from this name, of supposing that Thomas was present when the disciples came in. We are sure that he was not present in this meeting, when Jesus shewed himself. Yet, if Luke's expression is thought to imply that Thomas was with his brethren at the arrival of the disciples, we may suppose that he was one of those who would not believe, (Mark xvi. 13. p. 826.) and that he went away before they had finished their relation. 25. *The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, except I have the fullest evidence, arising from the testimony of my own seeing and feeling him, I will not believe that he is risen.*" See Prelim. Observ, VI.

Thus ended the transactions of the day on which our Lord arose from the dead; a day much to be remembered by men throughout all generations, because it brought fully into act the conceptions which had lodged in the breast of infinite wisdom from eternity, even those thoughts of love and mercy on which the salvation of the world depended. Christians therefore have the highest reason to solemnize this day with gladness each returning week, by ceasing from labour, and giving themselves up to holy meditations and other exercises of devotion. The redemption of mankind, which they commemorate thereon in its finishing stroke, affords matter for eternal thought, being such a subject as no other, how great soever, can equal; and whose lustre neither length of time nor frequent reviewing can ever diminish. For as by often beholding the sun, we do not find him less glorious or luminous than before, so this benefit which we celebrate

after



after so many ages, is as fresh and beautiful as ever, and will continue to be so, flourishing in the memories of all reasonable beings through the endless revolutions of eternity.

But that the reader may form a more distinct notion of the history which the evangelists have given of Christ's resurrection, it will not be improper here to join the several circumstances of that important affair together briefly, and in their order. The Jewish Sabbath being at hand when Jesus expired, his friends had not time to embalm him in the best manner, or even to carry him to the place where they intended he should remain, but they laid him in a new sepulchre hard by, belonging to one of themselves, with an intention to remove him after the Sabbath was over. The women therefore who were present, observing that the funeral rites were performed in a hurry, made an agreement to come and embalm him more at leisure. Accordingly, as soon as they returned to the city, they bought spices and prepared them. But the Sabbath coming on, they rested from working according to the commandment. When the Sabbath was ended, that is, on our Saturday evening about sun-setting, the two Marys, by appointment of the rest, set out to see if the stone was still at the door of the sepulchre, because thus they would be certain that the body was within. Or if the sepulchre was open, and the body taken away, they were to inquire of the gardener where it was laid, that the spices might be carried directly to the place. While the women were going on this errand, a great storm and earthquake happened, occasioned by the descent of an angel who came to wait on Jesus at his resurrection. This storm and earthquake terrifying the women, they turned back and joined their companions, who were going to buy some more spices to complete the preparation. In the mean time, the angel rolled away the stone from the door of the sepulchre, then sat down upon it, and assuming a very terrible form, frightened the guards. Soon after this Jesus arose, and the guards fled in a panic, probably to the first house they could find, where they waited till the morning. As the morning approached the storm abated. At length every thing being got ready, all the women went out together, and arrived at the sepulchre before the rising of the sun. The door was open. They entered and searched for the body, but it was gone. They were exceedingly perplexed. After consultation they agreed, that while they searched the garden, Mary Magdalene should go and inform the apostles of what had happened. Coming out of the sepulchre, therefore, she departed, and the rest began to search. But having traversed the garden a while to no purpose, they resolved to examine the sepulchre a second time, and were entering for that end, when lo ! an angel appeared in the farthest right corner, where the feet of Jesus had lain. He spake to them, desiring them to come and see the  
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place where the Lord lay. Upon this they descended, and saw another angel in the hithermost corner of the sepulchre. The angels desired them to carry the news of their Lord's resurrection to his disciples, and particularly to Peter. They departed, therefore, and made all the haste they could into the city. In the mean time, Mary Magdalene having told the apostles that the sepulchre was open, and the body taken away, they sent Peter and John to see what the matter was. The two apostles, together with Mary Magdalene, set out for the sepulchre about the time that the women who had seen the vision were running into the city ; but taking a different road in the fields, or a different street in the city, they did not meet them. When the company of women came, they related their story to the apostles, then inquired for Peter, having a message to him ; but being told that he was gone away with John to the sepulchre, they set out a second time, along with some of the brethren who were dispatched to examine the truth of their information ; expecting to find Peter either at the sepulchre or on the road. But as they were going out, he and John, having left Mary Magdalene at the sepulchre, came into the city, it seems, by a different street, for the women missed them. Nor did these apostles meet the disciples who were going out to examine the truth of the womens report. The disciples making all the haste they could, soon left the women with whom they had set out, and arrived at the garden about the time that Mary Magdalene was coming away ; for after Peter and John were gone, she stood beside the sepulchre weeping, and happening to look in, she saw first the angels, then Jesus himself, and was departing to tell the news just as the disciples arrived at the garden ; but she did not meet them, happening to be in a different walk from that by which they were coming up. The disciples went straightway to the sepulchre, and saw the angels, then departed. And being now but a little way behind Mary Magdalene, who was tired with the fatigue she had undergone, they travelled by a nearer road through the fields, or by a different street of the city, with such expedition, that they had told their story in the hearing of the two disciples that went to Emmaus, before she arrived. While these things were doing, Jesus met the company of women in their way to the sepulchre, and ordered them to go and inform his disciples how that they had seen him. Upon this they left off pursuing Peter, and returned to the apostles lodging, where they found Mary Magdalene telling her new story, which they confirmed by relating what had happened to themselves. Or we may suppose that Mary Magdalene fell in with them immediately after Jesus had left them, and that they all came to the apostles in a body. Peter hearing the women affirm that they had seen, not only a vision of angels, but Jesus himself, went to the sepulchre a second time,

but



but did not enter ; he only looked in, and saw the clothes lying as before. In his way home, however, he seems to have had the happiness of meeting with Jesus. The coming of the watch into the city, and their appearing before the council, is fixed by Matthew to the womens interview with our Lord. They had fled from the garden when Jesus arose, and being in a panic, had taken shelter in the first house they could find. But in the morning they began to gather courage, and at the time mentioned went and told what they had seen to the chief priests, who were called together by the high priest in order to receive their report. Soon after this, the disciples who travelled to Emmaus were overtaken by Jesus on the road. After he was gone they returned to Jerusalem, and told their brethren what had happened. While they were speaking, behold Jesus himself came in ; and to convince all present of the truth of his resurrection, shewed them his hands and his feet, and called for meat which he eat in their presence \*.

\* If the reader desires a more compendious view of the several journies to the sepulchre, and of the relation which they bear to one another, he may take it as follows : 1. The two Marys go out to see the sepulchre on Sunday evening, but are turned back by an earthquake and storm. 2. The Lord's day morning all the women arrive at the sepulchre in one company. Mary Magdalene runs into the city to tell the apostles that the body was taken away. 3. A while after Mary is gone, the women at the sepulchre see a vision of angels, then run to the city. 4. As the women enter the city, Mary Magdalene with Peter and John are coming out of the apostles lodging, to go to the sepulchre ; but taking a different street they miss the women. 5. Peter and John, having searched the sepulchre, depart ; but Mary stays behind. 6. As Peter and John are entering the city, the company of women leave the apostles lodging, and go with the brethren who are sent to the sepulchre to examine the truth of their report. They wished to see Peter that they might give him the good news, and deliver the angel's message to him. But they miss him and his companion John, who are coming in by a different street. 7. The brethren running faster than the women, leave them behind. They follow as quickly as they can, till Jesus meets them. The brethren arrive at the garden just as Mary Magdalene is leaving the sepulchre, after having seen the Lord ; but they do not meet with her, because they go in by a different walk. 8. Mary Magdalene running towards the city, comes up to the company of women just as Jesus leaves them. Instead of pursuing their journey, the one to the sepulchre, the other to the city, they all stand still and tell each other what had happened to them, then go in a body towards the city. 9. While Mary Magdalene and the women stand talking together, or while they are returning towards the city, the brethren who had come out with the women having gone forward to the sepulchre see the angels there. They instantly depart, run across the fields in great haste, arrive at the apostles lodging, and tell what they had seen in the hearing of the two disciples who set out for Emmaus, before Mary Magdalene and the women came up. 10. After the two disciples are gone away for Emmaus, Mary Magdalene and the company of women arrive in a body from their several interviews with Jesus. 11. On hearing the reports of the women, Peter runs to the sepulchre a second time, and as he returns he also sees the Lord. 12. In the evening the disciples arrive from Emmaus, and while they are telling their story, Jesus himself appears.



§ CLVII. *Jesus appears to the apostles, Thomas being with them.*  
 Mark xvi. 14. John xx. 26,—31.

“EIGHT days after his resurrection our Lord shewed himself again to the eleven, while Thomas was with them. Mark xvi. 14. *Afterward he appeared unto the eleven, as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief, and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.* It was Thomas whom Jesus now upbraided, as is evident from the more full account which John has given us of this affair. For, condescending to bear with the stubbornness of his unbelieving apostles, he desired Thomas in particular to put his finger into the print of the nails, and to thrust his hand into his side, that he might convince himself by the only proofs which he had declared should convince him. John xx. 27. *Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.* Thus Jesus demonstrated, not only that he was risen, but that he was possessed of divine knowledge, being conscious of the thoughts and actions of men. Accordingly Thomas, exceedingly struck with the proof, cried out in great amazement, *Ὁ κυριος μου, καὶ ὁ θεος μου, My Lord and my God.* Though the nominative often occurs for the vocative, it is the former case that is used here, the words *οὐκ* being understood. To this the context agrees, for we are told that these words were addressed to Jesus. 28. *Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.* Wherefore they cannot be taken merely as an exclamation of surprise, which is the Socinian gloss; but their meaning is, *Thou art really he whom I lately followed as my Lord, and I acknowledge thee to be possessed of infinite knowledge, and worship thee as my God.* 29. *Jesus said unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed: Thou hast believed my resurrection, because thou hast had it confirmed to thee by the united testimony of all thy senses; they are persons of a better disposition, who, without the evidence of sense, are so candid as to yield to the proofs which the divine wisdom has thought sufficient for convincing the world.* From this it would appear, that Thomas’s speech on the evening of the resurrection day, was a kind of boasting in the strength of his own understanding, and a praising of himself on that account. He would not believe that his Master was risen on such trivial evidence as the reports of women; nothing would convince him but the evidence of his own senses. John xx. 30. *And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book.* 31. *But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might*



*might have life through his name.* He appeared on several other occasions to his disciples after his resurrection, and by many infallible proofs, which are not written in this book, convinced them that he was alive after his passion. The appearances mentioned by the evangelists are nine in number. The apostle Paul speaks of one to James, and one to himself, which they have omitted. Accordingly this passage leads us to think, that Jesus shewed himself much oftener than there is any account of upon record."

§ CLVIII. *Jesus shews himself to his disciples at the sea of Tiberias.* John xxi. 1,—25.

"OUR Lord having, first by the angels, and then in person, ordered his disciples to go home to Galilee, with a promise that they should see him there, it is reasonable to think that they would depart as soon as possible. Wherefore, when they were come to their respective homes, they followed their occupations as usual; and particularly the apostles, who pursued their old trade of fishing on the lake. Here, as they were plying their nets one morning early, ver. 4. Jesus shewed himself to them. John xxi. 1. *After these things, Jesus shewed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise shewed he himself.* 2. *There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples.* 3. *Simon Peter said unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing.* 4. *But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore; but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus, for it was somewhat dark, and they were at a distance from him. He called to them, and asked if they had caught any thing? They answered, they had got nothing. He desired them to let down their nets on the right side of the boat. The disciples, imagining that he might be acquainted with the places proper for fishing, did as he directed them, and caught a multitude of fishes.* 5. *Then Jesus said unto them, Children, have ye any meat? they answered him, No. He asked this question, that he might have an opportunity to give them the following direction.* 6. *And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast, therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.* Such marvellous success, after having toiled all the preceding night to no purpose, could not fail to make them form various conjectures about the stranger who had given them the happy advice. Some could not tell who he was; others said he was the Lord. Simon Peter, who was of this latter opinion, entertaining no doubt of it, girt on his fishers coat, and cast himself  
into



into the sea, not to swim, but to walk ashore; for to have clothed himself had been a very improper preparation for swimming. He knew that the lake was shallow thereabouts, and would not wait till the boat dragged the net full of fishes ashore. Wherefore he leaped out hastily, and walked as fast as he could to the land, which was only about sixty paces off. All the inconvenience he sustained by this was but the wetting of his sandals, provided he had them on; for the ancients wore neither breeches nor stockings. John xxi. 7. *Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved, saith unto Peter. It is the Lord* Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fishers coat unto him, (for he was naked), (see Jewish Antiq. p. 145.) and did cast himself into the sea. 8 *And the other disciples came in a little ship (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits) dragging the net with fishes* When the disciples came ashore, they found a fire burning, on which there was a fish broiling. At hand also was some bread. But neither being sufficient for the company, or perhaps to shew them the reality of the miracle, by making them attend to the number and largeness of the fish which they had caught, and to the nets not being broken, Jesus bade them bring some of their own, then invited them to *dine*, that is, to eat with him. For the Greek word *agiznontes*, as Keuchenius has shewed, signifies sometimes to take meat in the morning, which is the meaning of it here, see verse 4. By this time they were all so fully convinced that it was the Lord, that none of them durst ask who he was. 9. *As soon as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.* 10. *Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught.* 11. *Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land, full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken.* 12. *Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord.* 13. *Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise.* It is not said indeed that Jesus now ate with them; but his invitation to them, verse 12. implies it. Besides, Peter testifies, Acts x. 41. that his apostles *did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead*; meaning to tell Cornelius, that that was one of the many infallible proofs by which he shewed himself alive after his passion. It is reasonable therefore to think, that he ate with his apostles on this occasion. Thus Jesus proved to his disciples anew the reality of his resurrection, not only by eating with them, but by working a miracle like that which, at the beginning of his ministry, had made such an impression upon them as disposed them to be his constant followers. 14. *This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.* The evangelist does  
not



not say that it was the third time Jesus appeared, but the third time he appeared to his disciples, i. e. to his apostles in a body; for in reality it was his seventh appearance. Besides, John himself has taken notice of three appearances before this. 15. *So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?* more than thy brethren apostles love me? in allusion to the high professions of love and fidelity which Peter had formerly made to him. *He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee.* Being taught modesty and diffidence by his late fall, Peter would not now compare himself with others, but humbly appealed to his Master's omniscience for the sincerity of his regard to him. Upon this, Jesus first desired him to feed his lambs, i. e. to exhort and comfort the young and tender part of the flock, those who were to be converted. *He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.* Then, to give him an opportunity of renewing his professions, John xxi. 16. *He saith unto him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?* *He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee.* *He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.* *He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?* Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, *Lovest thou me?* and he said unto him, *Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee.* *Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.* From our Lord's asking Peter if he loved him, before he gave him commission to feed his lambs and his sheep, it is justly inferred, that to render men duly qualified for the ministerial function, they must prefer the interest and honour of Christ to every other consideration whatever. This is the great qualification by which alone a minister can be animated to go through the labours and difficulties of his office, and be fortified against the dangers which may attend it. Moreover, Christ's exhortation to Peter to feed his lambs and sheep, being the reply which he made to Peter's declaration that he loved him, shews us that ministers best testify their love to Christ, by their singular care and diligence in feeding his flock. To conclude, the repetition of this commission three times, may have been in allusion to Peter's three denials. In it the Papists would have us to believe, that supreme dominion over the whole church, clergy as well as laity, was granted to Peter. However it has a quite different meaning; for Peter, by his late cowardice and perfidy, having as it were abdicated the apostleship, was hereby no more than formally restored to his office, through the indulgence of his kind and merciful Master.

"Peter being thus restored to the apostolical office and dignity, from which he had fallen by openly denying his Master three several times, Jesus proceeded to forewarn him of the persecutions to which he in particular would be exposed in the execution of his



his office ; intending thereby to inspire him with courage and constancy. John xxi. 18 *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, when thou wast young thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest : alluding to the strength and activity which he had now shewed in swimming ashore, after he had girded his fisher's coat upon him : but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not : Instead of that liberty which in thy youth thou enjoyedst, thou shalt in thine old age be a prisoner ; for thou shalt be bound and carried whither thou wouldest not ; carried to prison and to death. Accordingly the evangelist tells us, 19. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. The above words imply only that Peter should glorify God by suffering a violent death. But what Jesus added is understood to signify that Peter was to follow him in the kind of his death. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me : Follow me to the cross. Agreeably to this, the unanimous testimony of antiquity assures us that Peter was crucified. Tertull. Prescrip. c. 36. Euseb. Hist. ii. 25. iii. 1. Lactant. de Mort. Persecut. Prudent. de Passione Petri et Pauli. 20. Then Peter turning about, namely as he followed Jesus, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following ; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee ? 21. Peter seeing him, saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do ? Peter, it seems, understanding what Jesus meant when he ordered him to follow him, asked what would happen to his fellow-disciple John, who was now coming after them. 22. Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee ? Follow thou me : If I incline that he should live till my coming, what is that to thee ? So *μὴν* signifies, being elliptical for *μὴν ἢ τὴν αἰώνιον*. We have both the elliptical and the complete phrase, Philip. i. 24, 25. 23. Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die. The brethren, it seems, understood by Christ's coming, his coming to judgment ; and that they interpreted the phrase rightly, is evident from what the evangelist adds : Yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die ; but if I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee ? 24. This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things, and we know that his testimony is true. From this verse Grotius and others infer, that the Ephesian bishops added this whole chapter to John's gospel after his death. But it evidently proves the contrary, for the verse assures us that John wrote the things contained in this chapter : This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things. Farther, though the evangelist seems to conclude his gospel, chap. xx. 31. it is no unusual thing with the sacred writers to add new matter, after such conclusions. See the epistle to the*



the Romans and Hebrews at the end. Moreover, though the writer of this gospel is here spoken of in the third person, it is agreeable to John's manner, (see chap. xix. 35.) who likewise speaks of himself in the plural number, i Epist. v. 18. To conclude, the verse under consideration is shewed to be genuine by a similar passage in the conclusion of the third epistle, verse 12. *Yea, and we also bear record, and ye know that our record is true.* Wherefore, the chapter being genuine, this verse is no addition of the Ephesian bishops, as some critics would have us believe, who propose that it should be read in parenthesis. 25. *And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the \* world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen."*

\* John 25. *The world itself could not contain, &c.*] Οὐδὲ αὐτοὶ οἱ μὲν τοῦ Κόσμου χωρεῖσαι τὰ γραφόμενα βιβλία. According to some this is an hyperbole, a figure which the Ancients are known greatly to have dealt in, and which they carried far higher than is allowable in the European languages. Thus understood, the clause means that Jesus performed a prodigious number of miracles. Others however are of opinion, that the word *χωρεῖσαι* here has the signification in which it is used, Matt. xix. 11. "All men cannot receive (\* *χωρεῖν*) this saying." And, ver. 12. "He that is able to receive it, (*χωρεῖν*) let him receive it, (*χωρεῖτο*)." According to this import of the word, John informs us, that if all the miracles which Jesus performed were written, the world could not receive the books, could not believe them, because they would appear absolutely incredible. But to this interpretation it may be objected, that the phrase, *the world itself*, cannot mean the men of the world, for which reason the first sense is to be preferred.

§ CLIX. *Jesus appears to five hundred of the brethren in Galilee; and after that to the apostle James alone.* Matt. xxviii. 16, 17. 1 Cor. xv. 6.

"AND now the time approached when Jesus was to shew himself publicly in Galilee. This was the most remarkable of all his appearances. He promised it to the apostles before his death, Matt. xxvi. 32. The angels who attended at his resurrection spake of it to the women who came to the sepulchre, and represented it as promised to them also, Mark xvi. 7. Nay, Jesus himself, after his resurrection, desired the company of women to tell his brethren to go into Galilee, where they should see him; as if the appearances he was to make that day, and on the eighth day thereafter, were of small importance in comparison. Moreover, the place where he was to appear in Galilee was mentioned by him. So Matthew informs us, xxviii. 16. *Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.* Whether there were more present at this appearance than the eleven, the evangelist does not say; nevertheless, the circumstances of the case direct us to believe



believe that it had many witnesses. This appearance was known before-hand; the place where it was to happen was pointed out by Jesus himself. The report therefore of his being to appear must have spread abroad, and brought many to the place at the appointed time. In short, it is reasonable to think that most of the disciples now enjoyed the happiness of beholding personally their Master raised from the dead. What confirms this supposition is, that Paul says expressly, Jesus, after his resurrection, was seen of above five hundred brethren at one time. 1 Cor. xv. "After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep." For the number of the witnesses mentioned by Paul agrees better to the appearance on the mountain in Galilee described by Matthew, than to any other. Galilee having been the principal scene of Christ's ministry, \* the greatest part of his followers lived there; for which reason he chose to make what may be called his most solemn and public appearance after his resurrection, on a mountain in that country; an appearance to which a general meeting of all his disciples was summoned, not only by the angels who attended his resurrection, but by our Lord himself the very day on which he arose. 17. *And when they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted.* The greatest part were so fully convinced that the person they saw was their Master, that they worshipped him. But with respect to a few, their joy on seeing the Lord put them into a kind of perturbation, and their desire that it might be him made them afraid it was not. This reason is assigned by Luke for the unbelief of some on a former occasion, chap. xxiv. 41. and therefore it may fitly be offered to account for the unbelief of others on this. Besides, the thing is agreeable to nature; men being commonly afraid to believe what they vehemently wish, lest they should indulge themselves in false joys, which they must soon lose. Hence the saying in Terence, *Misera mens incredula est: quo plus cupio, minus credo*†. Probably at this appearance the

\* The greatest part of his followers lived there.] To this agrees the particular, mentioned Acts i. 15. namely, that the number of the disciples met at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, about a week after our Lord's ascension, were only one hundred and twenty. In Jerusalem and the country about he had few followers, his disciples being mostly Galileans.

† The case of the disciples, whose desire and joy made them doubt the truth of what they saw, may be illustrated by the instance of the states of Greece and Asia, whose joy and surprise, on hearing a Roman herald declare them all free and at liberty to use their own laws, had a similar effect upon them, as the story is beautifully told by Livy, lib. 33. c. 35. "Audita voce praeconis, majus gaudium fuit quam quod universum homines caperent. Vix satis credere se quisquam audisse. Aliis alios intueri mirabundi, velut somnii vanam speciem. Quod ad quenquam pertineret suarum aurium fidei minimum credentes proximos interrogabant. Rovo-



the apostles received orders to return to Jerusalem; for from Acts i. 3,—12. compared with Luke xxiv. 50. it is plain that our Lord's discourses, before his ascension, related Mark xvi. 15. and Luke xxiv. 44. were delivered in or near to the city. Besides, he ascended from the mount of Olives, as we shall see immediately. Wherefore, if the orders for the apostles to repair to Jerusalem were not given at this appearance, Jesus must have shewed himself again, which indeed is not impossible; as it is evident from 1 Cor. xv. that he shewed himself somewhere to the apostle James alone, though none of the evangelists have given the least hint of that appearance. 7. *After that* (viz. his appearance to the five hundred brethren) *he was seen of James.* In the college of the apostles there were two persons of this name: one the brother of John, who was killed by Herod, another the brother or cousin of Jesus. Perhaps it was to James the brother of John that our Lord appeared after his resurrection. His being to suffer martyrdom so early, might make this special favour necessary."

catus præco. Cum unusquisque non audire, sed videre libertatis nuncium averet: iterum pronunciat eadem. Tum ab cetero jam gaudio, tantus cum clamore plausus est ortus totique repetitus, ut facile appareret, nihil omnium bonorum multitudini gratius, quam libertatem esse."

§ CLX. *Jesus ascends into heaven from the mount of Olives near Jerusalem, in the presence of his eleven disciples.* Matt. xxviii. 18,—20. Mark xvi. 15,—20. Luke xxiv. 44,—53. Acts i. 3,—12.

"Thus Jesus, Acts i. 3. *shewed himself alive* (to the apostles whom he had chosen, and to his other disciples) *after his passion, by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.* It seems he continued on earth forty days after he arose, and in the several interviews which he had with his disciples during that period, he gave them many infallible proofs of his resurrection, and discoursed to them concerning the new dispensation of religion which he was going to erect in the world by their ministry; and so having accomplished all the purposes of his coming, nothing remained but that he should ascend into heaven in the presence of his apostles. These men were now gone up to Jerusalem to prepare themselves for the feast of Pentecost. Thither Jesus went, and \* shewed himself to them for the last time. And because

\* Shewed himself to them for the last time.] By the history which the evangelists have given of our Lord's resurrection, it is evident that he shewed himself to his disciples and friends only, and not to the Jews in general. Agreeably to this, Peter, in his sermon to the proselyte Cornelius, Acts x. 39. says expressly, "Whom they slew and hanged on a tree.



cause they were still in deep dejection on account of the afflictions of his life and the ignominy of his death, he on this memorable occasion introduced that subject ; putting them in mind, that during his abode with them in Galilee, he had often told them that  
all

40. Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly, not to all the people (of the Jews) but unto witnesses, chosen before of God, even to us (apostles) who did eat and drink with him after he arose from the dead." It was this circumstance which gave Spinoza a pretext for raising what his disciples ever since have considered as their strongest argument against our Lord's resurrection. If, say they, he really arose from the dead, to have shewed himself to his enemies as well as to his friends, would have put the truth of his resurrection beyond all doubt, than which nothing could be more necessary to the cause of Christianity ; and therefore the supposition of his having confined his appearances after his resurrection to a few select friends, renders the whole affair extremely suspicious and improbable.

But this argument, however plausible, has not the least force in it ; because it may be demonstrated, that if Jesus had shewed himself to his enemies and to all the people, these appearances, instead of putting the truth of his resurrection beyond doubt, would rather have weakened the evidence of it, at least in after ages, and so would have been of infinite detriment to mankind. For upon the supposition that our Lord had shewed himself openly, one of these two things must necessarily have happened : Either his enemies, yielding to the evidence of their senses, would have believed his resurrection ; or, resisting that evidence, they would reject it altogether. I shall begin with considering the latter supposition.

1. Such of our Lord's enemies as resisted the evidence of their senses, or who, though they were really convinced, would not acknowledge their conviction, must have justified their disbelief by affirming, that the man who appeared to them as risen from the dead, was not Jesus whom the Romans had crucified, but an impostor who personated him. On any other foundation their infidelity would have been ridiculous and absurd. But if the unbelieving Jews, by our Lord's appearing personally to them, would have been laid under a necessity of denying the reality of his resurrection, even though persuaded of it in their own minds, the evidence of the fact could have gained nothing by such public appearances, because the generality of the Jews were not capable of passing a judgment upon the falsehood which Christ's enemies must have made use of to support their denial of his resurrection. A considerable number of them indeed had seen Jesus, and heard him preach ; but they were not so intimately acquainted with him as to be able to tell with certainty whether he was really the person whom the Romans had crucified ; and as for the rest, they were no judges of this affair at all. His apostles, disciples, and acquaintance, who by their long attendance upon him, knew his stature, and shape, and air, and voice, and manner, were the only proper persons by whose determination the point in dispute could be decided. Wherefore, notwithstanding our Lord had appeared to all the people, if any considerable number of his enemies had continued in their infidelity, the whole stress of the evidence of his resurrection must have rested on the testimony of the very persons, who, according to the plan pitched upon by Providence, have borne witness to it now, and upon whose testimony the world has believed it. So that, instead of gaining any additional evidence by the proposed method of shewing Jesus publicly to all the people, we would have had nothing to trust to but the testimony of his disciples,



all the things written in the law, prophets, and Psalms, concerning him, were to be fulfilled. Luke xxiv. 44. *And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in*

and that clogged with this incumbrance, that his resurrection was denied by many to whom he appeared, and who were not convinced thereby.

2. But in the second place it may be fancied, that on supposition our Lord arose from the dead, the whole people of the Jews must have believed, provided he had shewed himself publicly; and that future generations would thus have had the fullest evidence of the truth of his resurrection.

To this form of the argument I reply, that the greatest part of our Lord's enemies having not given themselves the trouble of attending him often, cannot be supposed so well acquainted with his person, as to have been able to know him with certainty. For which reason, though he had shewed himself to them, even their belief of his resurrection must in a great measure have depended on the testimony of his disciples and friends. If so, it is not very probable that his appearing publicly would have had any great influence upon the Jews, to persuade them to embrace a crucified Messiah. It is more reasonable to believe, that they would have rejected the whole, and continued in their infidelity.

However, to give the argument as much strength as the deists can desire, let it be supposed, that in consequence of our Lord's appearing to all the people of the Jews, the nation in general would have been convinced of the truth of his resurrection, and become his disciples, what advantage do you think would the cause of Christianity have reaped from such great effects of our Lord's public appearances? Would the evidence of his resurrection have become thereby the more unquestionable? Or would modern infidels have been the better disposed thereby to believe? By no means. For we do not find men of this stamp at all the more apt to believe the miracles of Moses in Egypt, at the Red Sea, and in the wilderness, because the whole nation were witnesses of them. The truth is, had our Lord persuaded all the people of the Jews, by appearing personally to them, the objections against his resurrection would have been tenfold more numerous and forcible than they are at present. For, to use the words of the learned Dr Benson on this subject, "Would not the whole have been called a state trick, a Jewish fable, a mere political contrivance to patch up their broken credit, after they had so long talked of a Messiah who was to come at that time?" Besides, would we not have been told that the government being engaged in the plot, a fraud of this kind might easily have been carried on, especially as the people in general would eagerly fall in with it, because it suited their prejudices, and because the few who had sagacity enough to detect the fraud, could have no opportunity to examine into it. Or if they did examine and detect the fraud, doubtless they durst not make any discovery of it, in opposition to the whole weight of the state, so that they would let it pass quietly without once calling it in question.

To say the truth, the resurrection of Jesus universally believed among the Jews, and published to the world by the concurring voice of the nation, would have been liable to an infinite number of objections, which are all effectually cut off by the scheme chosen in the wisdom of Providence. For as the people in general, but especially the rulers, continued in their infidelity, the persons concerned in this supposed fraud must have carried it on under the greatest disadvantages. The reason is, instead of having many friends to assist them, which a fraud of this kind requires, all men were their enemies, and interested to discover the cheat. In particular, the Jewish rulers, we are sure, gave all possible encouragement to

make



*in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning me. 45. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures.* By the operation of his Spirit he removed their prejudices, cleared their doubts, enlarged their memories, strengthened their judgments, and enabled them to discern the true meaning of the Scriptures. Having thus qualified them for receiving the truth, he assured them Moses and the prophets had foretold that Messiah was to suffer in the very manner he had suffered, that he was to rise from the dead on the third day as he had done, that repentance and remission of sins were to be preached in Messiah's name \* among all nations, beginning with the Jews, and that the first offers of these blessings were to be made to such of them as dwelt in Jerusalem. 46. *And he said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: 47. And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.* Then he told them, that in him they had beheld the exact accomplishment of all the prophecies concerning the sufferings and resurrection of Messiah, and that they were chosen by God as the witnesses of these things, in order that they might certify them to the world. Luke xxiv. 48. *And ye are witnesses of these things.* Withal, to fit them for this great and important work, he told them he would send upon them miraculous gifts of the Spirit, which he called *the promise of the Father*, because God had promised them by the prophets. At the same time he commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem till they had received those gifts. 49. *And behold I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, till ye be endued with power from on high:* The season of their receiving the gifts of the Spirit was so near, and

make the strictest scrutiny into the fact, and into all its circumstances; and many no doubt zealously made the inquiry with the utmost exactness. The apostles who preached the resurrection exposed themselves to the fiercest resentment of the men in power, because Christ's resurrection cast a heavy reflection on those who had put him to death. Besides, it ought to be considered, that if the generality of the nation had not continued in their unbelief, the apostles who preached the resurrection would not have suffered those persecutions which in every country were raised against them, chiefly by the Jews, and of consequence one of the strongest arguments for the truth of their testimony would have been wanting. Whereas, having been persecuted to death for preaching the resurrection of their Master, this circumstance fully demonstrates how sincerely they believed the great fact which they preached with the constant peril of their lives. See Prelim. Observ. VII. No. 4.

\* Among all nations.] The preaching of repentance and remission of sins to the Gentiles, was foretold by Isaiah, xlix. 6. Accordingly that prophecy was applied by Paul to this event, Acts xiii. 47. "For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee (Christ) to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth."



and the work for which they were to be bestowed was so urgent, that the apostles could not leave Jerusalem even on pretence of going home; especially as it was determined by the prophets, that in Jerusalem the preaching of repentance and remission of sins should begin; to qualify them for which, the gift of miracles was to be bestowed upon them. To conclude, he told them that the dignity of his character who was their Master, and the efficacy of his ministry should be demonstrated to be greater than John's, by the miraculous gifts to be bestowed on them. For whereas John only baptized his disciples with water, he would baptize both them and their converts with the Holy Ghost. Acts i. 5. *For John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.* See to this purpose the sentiments of the Baptist himself, Luke iii. 16.

“ Having thus spoken, he led them out of the town to the mount of Olives; and being come to that part of the mountain which was above Bethany, the apostles, whose minds were still full of the temporal monarchy, asked him if he would now restore the kingdom to Israel. Luke xxiv. 50. *And he led them out as far as to Bethany.* Acts i. 6. *When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?* 7. *And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power:* It will not be of any use to you in your work; to know the times or the seasons of the restoration of the kingdom to Israel. Besides, this is one of the things which the Father hath thought fit to conceal from mortals in the abyss of his own omniscience. This only is of importance to you to know, that you shall receive miraculous powers after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and that by these powers you shall bear witness unto me with great success, not only in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, but to the uttermost parts of the earth. 8 *But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.* Moreover he told them, that he was now raised to the government of heaven and earth; for which reason they might go courageously through the whole world, and preach the gospel to every reasonable creature, well assured, that affairs in all countries should be so ordered as to dispose the inhabitants for the reception of the gospel. Matt. xxviii. 18 *And he spake unto them, saying, All power is given me in heaven and in earth.* 19. *Go ye therefore, \* and teach all nations,*

\* Matt 19. *And teach all nations, baptizing them.*] Because teaching is here enjoined as previous to baptism, it is inferred by some that infants are not to be baptized. But if this argument were good, it would follow from



tions, (Mark, *Preach the gospel to every creature*). Withal, those who believed in consequence of their preaching, he appointed to be received into his church by the rite of baptism, and be taught to obey all the precepts he had enjoined them: *Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you* Such baptized believers, he assured them, should receive the pardon of their sins, together with eternal life; but those who did not believe and obey the gospel when preached to them, should be damned. Mark xvi. 16. *He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that \* believeth not shall be damned.* And to encourage them in the great and difficult work which he now assigned to them, he promised that while they were employed in it, he would be with them and their successors in the ministry to the end of the world, to guide them by his counsel, to assist them by his Spirit, and to protect them by his providence. Matt. xxviii. 20. *And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.* Finally, that those who through their preaching were induced to believe, should themselves work most astonishing miracles; a circumstance which should contribute greatly towards the spreading of the gospel. Nay, he mentioned the particular miracles which they should be enabled to perform. Mark xvi. 17. *And these signs shall follow them that believe: in my name shall they cast out devils, they shall speak with new tongues; 18. They shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.* When he had spoken these things, he lift up his hands and blessed them, and in the action of blessing them, he was parted from them in open day-light, perhaps about mid day, a bright cloud receiving him out of their sight, that is, covering him about, and carrying him into heaven, not suddenly, but at leisure, that they might behold him departing, and see the proof of his having come down from heaven, which he promised them, John xvi. 28. Acts i. 9. *And*  
• *when*

from Mark xvi. 16. that infants cannot be saved. Nay, it is there declared, that he who believes not shall be damned. The truth is, both passages must be interpreted according to the subjects treated of in them, which are plainly adult persons; and therefore no argument can be drawn from them concerning either the baptism or the salvation of infants.

\* *He that believeth not shall be damned.*] This passage we must explain by John iii. 19. where our Lord explains the reason of the condemnation of such unbelievers as are damned for not believing the gospel that is preached to them. "This," says he, "is the condemnation," the reason of the condemnation, namely of those whom, in the precedent verse, he had represented as condemned for not believing in the name of the only begotten Son of God—"that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." Those who shall be condemned for not believing, are such as disbelieve merely because their deeds are evil.



when he had spoken these things, (Luke, *he lift up his hands and blessed them. And it came to pass while he blessed them*) while they beheld, (therefore this transaction happened in the day-time) he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight. (Luke, *he was carried up into heaven. Mark, was received up into heaven.*) 10. *And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven, as he went up, behold two men stood by them in white apparel:* Two angels stood by them, who, though they had assumed the form and garb of men, were, by the majesty and splendour of their appearance, known of the apostles to be angels. For as Christ's resurrection had been honoured with the appearance of angels, it was natural to think that his ascension into heaven would be so likewise. 11. *Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven?* (It seems they looked up stedfastly after he was gone out of sight, expecting, perhaps, to see him come down again immediately) *This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven:* He shall come in the same glorious manner in which you have now seen him ascend. The angels spake of his coming to judge the world at the last day, a description of which Jesus in his life-time had given. Matt. xvi. 27. "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels." Wherefore the cloud whereon the Lord now ascended being the same with that in which he is to come again, was more bright and pure than the clearest lambent flame; for it was *the glory of the Father*, that is, the Schechinah or visible symbol of the divine presence, which appeared to the patriarchs in ancient times, which filled the temple at its dedication, 2 Chron. vii. 3. and which in its greatest splendour cannot be beheld with mortal eyes; so for that reason is called the light inaccessible in which God dwells, 1 Tim. vi. 16. It was on this occasion probably, that \* our Lord's body was changed, acquiring the glories of immortality, perhaps in the view of the disciples, who looked at their Master all the time he was mounting, Acts i. 10. As he ascended up into the skies, the flaming cloud which surrounded him, leaving a track of light behind it, marked his passage through the air, but gradually lost its magnitude in the eyes of them who stood below, till soaring high, he and it vanished out of their sight; for he was received up where the Deity manifests himself

\* Our Lord's body was changed.] For flesh and blood, such as he arose with, cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Accordingly the body which he now has, is called a glorious body, and declared to be of the same nature with that which the saints shall have after their resurrection. Phil. iii. 21. "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." Wherefore, though the Scripture is silent as to the time when this change passed upon Christ's body, we must suppose that it happened either immediately before his ascension, or in the time of it, or soon after it.



himself in a peculiar manner. *Mark xvi. 19. And sat on the right hand of God:* that is, in his human nature was advanced in dignity next to the Divine Majesty; all power in heaven and earth being given him. And this universal government he will hold, till he fully establishes the dominion of righteousness, when he will deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, that God may be all in all."

In this illustrious manner did the Saviour depart, after having finished the grand work which he came down upon earth to execute; a work which God himself, in the remotest eternity, contemplated with pleasure, which angels anciently, and superior natures, with joy descried as to happen, and which through all eternity to come shall, at periods the most immensely distant from the time of its execution, be looked back upon with inexpressible delight by every inhabitant of heaven. For though the little affairs of time may vanish altogether and be lost, when they are removed far back by the endless progression of duration, this object is such, that no distance however great can lessen it. The kingdom of God is erected upon the incarnation and sufferings of the Son of God, the kingdom and city of God comprehending all the virtuous beings that are in the universe, made happy by goodness and love; and therefore none of them can ever forget the foundation on which their happiness stands firmly established. In particular the human species, recovered by this labour of the Son of God, will view their Deliverer, and look back on his stupendous undertaking with high ravishment, while they are feasting without interruption on its sweet fruits, ever growing more delicious. The rest of the members likewise of the city of God will contemplate it with perpetual pleasure, as the happy mean of recovering their kindred that were lost, and it may be as the grand confirmation of the whole rational system, in their subjection to him who liveth and reigneth for ever, and whose favour is better than life.

The apostles having seen their Master ascend into heaven, were fully convinced of his having come down thence, and of his being Messiah. This persuasion they testified by paying him divine honours. *Luke xxiv. 52 And they worshipped him.* His ascension, therefore, gave the apostles great joy, and the more so, that in all probability they did not consider it as their Master's final parting with them. For we may reasonably suppose they understood what the angels said unto them concerning his return, not of his return to judge the world at the last day, but of his return to restore and take upon himself the kingdom of Israel, an event which they would expect to happen very soon. *Acts i. 12. Then returned they unto Jerusalem (Luke, with great joy) from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey. A sabbath day's journey being only a thousand*  

paces,



paces, we are to understand Luke as describing the distance of that part of Olivet which was nearest to the city, in which way the distance of mountains was commonly measured. For Bethany, on the other side of the mountain, nigh to which, as Luke himself informs us, our Lord ascended, was full two miles from Jerusalem. After the apostles returned to the city, they spent the greatest part of their time in the temple, praising and blessing God, as for all his benefits, so in particular for the resurrection of their Master from the dead, after he had been unjustly and inhumanly crucified by a cabal of wicked men, for his glorious ascension into heaven, and for the promise that was made them concerning his return. Perhaps they were much in the temple likewise, because they expected their Master at his return would make his first appearance there. Luke xxiv. 53. *And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God Amen.* The apostles, about eight days after this, received the Holy Ghost according to their Master's promise. He descended upon them in a visible form, which betokened both the efficacy of his operations, and the first fruits thereof. Cloven tongues as of fire sat on each of them, and immediately they were inspired with the faculty of speaking all the languages of the world. After the descent of the Holy Ghost upon them, the apostles were led to form a more just notion of their Master's kingdom, for they immediately applied themselves with great earnestness to their proper work of preaching the gospel first in Jerusalem, then in Judea and Samaria, afterwards in all the different countries of the world, according to the instructions they had received from their Master's own mouth at parting. In spreading the knowledge of the Christian religion in far distant countries, they met with great approbation and acceptance, both from the Jews and Gentiles, who were not able to resist the evidence of the miracles whereby they confirmed their doctrine. Of these things Mark gives us an account. From which it is reasonable to conclude, that he published his gospel pretty late. Mark xvi. 20. *And they went forth and preached every where, the Lord (i. e. Christ. See Matt. xxviii. 20.) working with them, confirming the word with signs following. Amen.*

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## CONCLUSION.

THUS endeth the history of the life of Christ; a life the greatest and best that ever was led by man, or ever was the subject of any history. The human character of Jesus, as it results from the accounts which the evangelists have given of him, for they have not formally drawn it, is entirely different from that of all other men whatsoever. For whereas they have the selfish passions deeply rooted in their breasts, and are influenced by them in al-

most



most every thing they do, Jesus was so entirely free from them, that the narrowest scrutiny cannot furnish one single action in the whole course of his life, wherein he consulted his own interest only. The happiness of others was what he had chiefly at heart. And while his contemporaries followed, some one kind of occupation, some another, Jesus had no other business but that of promoting the welfare of men. *He went about doing good.* He did not wait till he was solicited, but sought opportunities of conferring benefits on such as stood in need of them, and always *reckoned it more blessed to give than to receive*; in which respect he differed exceedingly from the rest of mankind, and was much more like to God than to man. In the next place, whereas it is common even for persons of the most exalted faculties, on the one hand to be elated with success and applause, and on the other to be dejected with great disappointments, it was not so with Jesus. He was never more courageous than when he met with the greatest opposition and the worst treatment, nor more humble than when men fell down and worshipped him. He came into the world inspired with the grandest purpose that ever was formed, even that of saving, not a single nation, but the whole world; and in the execution of it went through the longest and heaviest train of labours that ever was sustained; and that with a constancy of resolution, on which no disadvantageous impression could be made by any accident whatsoever. Calumny, threatenings, opposition, bad success, with the other evils befalling him, served only to quicken his endeavours in this glorious enterprise, which he pursued unweariedly till he finished it by his death. In the third place, whereas most men are prone to retaliate the injuries that are done them, and all seem to take a satisfaction in complaining of the cruelties of those who oppress them, the whole of Christ's behaviour breathed nothing but meekness, patience, and forgiveness even to his bitterest enemies, and in the midst of extreme sufferings. The words, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do*, uttered by him when his enemies were nailing him to the cross, fitly expressed the temper which he maintained through the course of his life, even when assaulted with the heaviest provocations. The truth is, on no occasion did he ever signify the least resentment by speech or by action, nor indeed any emotion of mind whatever, except such as flowed from pity and charity, consequently such only as expressed the deepest concern for the welfare of mankind. To conclude, the greatest and best men have had failings which darken the lustre of their virtues, and shew them to have been men. This was the case with Noah, Abraham, Moses, Job, Solomon, Paul, and the other heroes celebrated in history. The same thing may be said of all the greatest geniuses in the heathen world, who undertook to instruct and reform mankind; for, omitting the narrow-



ness of their knowledge, and the obscurity with which they spake upon the most important subjects, there was not one of them who did not fall into some gross error or other, which dishonoured his character as a teacher. The accounts we have in history of the most renowned sages of antiquity, and the writings of the philosophers still remaining, are proofs of this. It was otherwise with Jesus in every respect. For he was superior to all the men that ever lived, both in the sublimity of his doctrine, in the purity of his manners, and in the perfection of his virtues. He *was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners*. Whether you consider him as a teacher or a man, *he did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth*. His whole life was perfectly free from spot or weakness, at the same time that it was remarkable for the greatest and most extensive exercises of virtue. But never to have committed the least sin in word or in deed, never to have uttered any sentiment that could be found fault with, upon the various topics of religion and morality which were the daily subjects of his discourse, and that through the course of a life filled with action, and led under the observation of many enemies, who had always access to converse with him, and who often came to find fault, is a pitch of perfection plainly above the reach of humanity; and therefore he who possessed it must certainly have been divine. Accordingly, the evidence of this proof being undeniable, both as an argument and as a matter of fact, Jesus himself publicly appealed to it, before all the people in the temple, John viii. 46. *Which of you convinceth (or rather, convicteth) me of sin? And if in affirming that I am perfectly free from sin, I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?*

Such was the person who is the subject of the evangelical history. If the reader, by viewing his life, doctrine, and miracles, as they are here presented to him united in one series, has obtained a clearer notion of these things than before, or discerns a beauty in his actions thus linked together, which taken separately does not so fully appear; if he feels himself touched with the character of Jesus in general, or with any of his sermons and actions in particular, thus simply delineated in writings whose principal charms are the beauties of truth; above all, if his dying so generously for men strikes him with admiration, or fills him with joy, in the prospect of that pardon which is thereby purchased for the world—let him seriously consider with himself what improvement he ought to make of the divine goodness.

Jesus, by his death, has set open the gates of immortality to men, and by his word, Spirit, and example, graciously offers to make them meet for, and conduct them into the inheritance of the saints in light. Wherefore, being born under the dispensation of his gospel, we have, from our earliest years, enjoyed the best means of acquiring wisdom, virtue, and happiness, the lineaments  
of



of the image of God. We have been called to aspire after an exaltation to the nature and felicity of God, set before mortal eyes in the man Jesus Christ, to fire us with the noblest ambition. His gospel teaches us that we are made for eternity, and that our present life is to our after existence, what childhood is to man's estate. But as in childhood many things are to be learned, many hardships to be endured, many habits to be acquired, and that by a tedious course of exercises, which in themselves though painful, and it may be useless to the child, yet are necessary to fit him for the business and enjoyments of manhood: just so, while we remain in this infancy of human life, things are to be learned, hardships to be endured, and habits to be acquired, by a laborious course of discipline. which, however painful, must cheerfully be undergone, because necessary to fit us for the employments and pleasures of our riper existence above. Our Father, ever mindful of us, has sent down Jesus, the express image of his own person, to initiate us into, and carry us through this course of education for eternity. Inflamed therefore with the love of immortality and its joys, let us submit ourselves to our heavenly Teacher, and learn of him those graces which alone can make life pleasant, death desirable, and fill eternity with ecstatic joys.

**A TABLE**



# T A B L E

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# M A T T H E W.

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